

Oxides of carbon



- Carbon monoxide, a primary pollutant, is mainly produced by the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels. It is also present in cigarette smoke.
- The colorless, odorless gas is poisonous. It binds to hemoglobin, impeding delivery of oxygen to cells. This causes dizziness, nausea, drowsiness, and headaches; it has been implicated in the incidence of road traffic accidents in highly polluted areas.
- At high concentrations it can cause death.
- Carbon monoxide pollution from automobiles can be reduced through the use of catalytic converters and oxygenated fuels.

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- Carbon dioxide is produced by the complete combustion of fossil fuels.
- Its sinks are photosynthesis and dissolution in sea water.
- It is considered a greenhouse gas (GHG) because it heats up the atmosphere by allowing incoming solar radiant energy to penetrate to the Earth's surface while reabsorbing infrared radiation emanating from it.
- As a result of this characteristic, excess amounts of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere may contribute to global warming. Carbon dioxide can also react with water in the atmosphere and produce slightly acidic rain.
- Carbon dioxide emissions can be reduced by limiting the amount of fossil fuels burned.