

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

NO_x CONTROLS FOR EXISTING UTILITY BOILERS

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The Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management (NESCAUM) requested assistance from the CTC in the development of a technical support document that would discuss the feasibility, performance and costs of retrofit nitrogen oxides (NO_x) controls for utility boilers operating in the eight Northeast states that comprise the NESCAUM region. Section 182 of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (CAAA) requires the NESCAUM States to develop reasonably available control technology (RACT) standards for utility boilers and ' other NO_x sources. This document will also assist OAQPS in developing alternative control techniques (ACT) documents for NO_x controls for utility boilers. The ACT documents are required under Section 183 (c) of the CAAA for stationary source categories that emit or have the potential to emit 25 tons per year of NO_x. The report titled "Evaluation and Costing of NO_x Controls for Existing utility Boilers in the NESCAUM Region", (EPA-453/R-92-010) is now available.

This document discusses:

- Utility boiler population profile in the NESCAUM region.
- Uncontrolled NO_x emissions as a function of boiler designs, fuels, and age and current estimates of total NO_x emissions.
- Available NO_x control technologies and their performance for coal-and oil/gas fired boilers.
- Cost methodology for determining the costs of 21 scenarios for NO_x controls.
- Costs and cost effectiveness of controls as a function of several design and operating characteristics of boilers.
- Impacts of NO_x controls on combustible emissions (CO, HC, and carbon in flyash).

Because the applicability, ease of retrofit, NO_x reduction performance, and costs are very much influenced by site-specific factors that cannot be taken fully into account without a site-by-site retrofit analysis, results and conclusions presented in this report should be interpreted on the basis of the limited NO_x retrofit experience reported to date. Site-specific analyses are recommended to ascertain whether the emission levels, percent NO_x reductions, and costs cited in this report can be achieved on a long term basis by a given site.

NO_x emissions from utility boilers are a function of fuel properties and many boiler design and operating variables. Among the most important variables are the fuel nitrogen content, the

excess air, the heat release rate per unit of waterwall area in the burner zone, the amount of air preheat and the burner spacing and stoichiometry.

NO_x combustion modification technologies such as low NO_x burners (LNB), overfire air (OFA), burners out of service (BOOS) and flue gas recirculation (FGR) are the principal methods for controlling NO_x from existing and new utility boilers. Flue gas treatment controls including selective catalytic reduction (SCR) and selective noncatalytic reduction (SNCR) can provide additional NO_x reductions from combustion controlled levels or can be used without combustion modifications. Both of these processes have seen very limited application in the United States for utility boilers, but SCR is being used extensively in Japan and Germany with reported successes on all fuels.

Table 1 summarizes the NO_x emission levels and cost effectiveness for various control technologies for 200 MW units. For PC- wall fired boilers the bulk of the retrofit experience is limited to low NO_x burners. Overfire air (OFA) is generally not installed because of additional expenses and possible adverse impacts on the operation and efficiency of the boiler. For tangential fired boilers LNB always has close coupled OFA or, in more advanced systems, separate OFA. The range in control efficiency for LNB and/or OFA is 15-60%. Cost effectiveness is typically in the range of \$200-1,000 per ton of NO_x removed.

Natural gas reburning (NGR) for Coal-firing boilers can achieve 45 to 65% NO_x reductions. The technical and economic feasibility of NGR are currently under study. Cost effectiveness is under \$800/ton NO_x removed when applied to high NO_x emitting cyclone units.

For coal fired utility boilers, SNCR can achieve similar emission reductions at slightly higher cost effectiveness as combustion modifications (\$590-1300/ton). SCR can achieve 80 percent NO_x reductions from uncontrolled boilers at a cost effectiveness of \$1700-5000/ton. However due to limited full scale experience, the cost estimates for SNCR and SCR have a high degree of uncertainty.

Combustion modification controls for oil/gas fired utility boilers have been used since the early 1970s primarily in

California. Estimated emission levels for these controls are 0.1 to 0.35 lb/MMBtu or a NO_x reduction of 15-80%. The cost effectiveness varies from \$100 to \$5100/ton. SNCR is estimated to achieve a 35 to 50 percent NO_x reduction at a cost effectiveness of \$670-2200/ton. SCR is estimated to achieve 65-85% reduction at cost effectiveness of \$2600-7400/ton.

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TABLE 1.

SUMMARY OF NO_x CONTROLS - PERFORMANCE AND COST EFFECTIVENESS

Boiler Type	NOX Control Levels (lb/MMbtu)	NOX Control Eff.	% Nox Effect. (\$/ton)	Cost
PC-Wall	OFA	0.70 - 0.80	15 - 30	410 - 1100
PC-Wall	LNB	0.45 - 0.60	35 - 55	160 - 450
PC-Wall	LNB+OFA	0.35 - 0.55	40 - 60	270 - 800
PC-Tang	LNB-CCOFA	0.40 - 0.45	25 - 50	500 - 1300
PC-Tang	LNB+SOFA	0.30 - 0.45	25 - 50	420 - 1600
PC-Wall	SNCR	0.50 - 0.65	30 - 50	590 - 1100
PC-Wall	SCR	0.15 - 0.25	75 - 85	1700 - 3200
PC-Tang	SNCR	0.30 - 0.40	30 - 50	630 - 1300

PC-Tang SCR	0.10 - 0.15	75 - 85	2600 - 5000
Cyclone NGR	0.50 - 0.70	45 - 65	500 - 800
O/G Wall BOOS	0.30 - 0.35	15 - 50	230 - 510
O/G Wall FGR	0.25 - 0.35	30 - 50	320 - 1000
O/G Wall LNB	0.25 - 0.30	25 - 50	750 - 1700
O/G Wall LNB+OFA+FGR	0.10 - 0.20	30 - 80	900 - 2600
O/G Tang BOOS	0.20 - 0.25	15 - 35	340 - 740
O/G Tang LNB	0.15 - 0.25	15 - 50	1000 - 5100
O/G Wall SNCR	0.25 - 0.30	35 - 50	670 - 1100
O/G Wall SCR	0.10 - 0.15	70 - 80	2600 - 4900
O/G Tang SNCR	0.15 - 0.20	35 - 50	800 - 2200
O/G Tang SCR	0.05 - 0.10	65 - 85	3600 - 7400

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