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## Power Plant Emissions: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Releases 2021 Data

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The United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") released on February 18th annual data on 2021 emissions from power plants in the lower 48 states.

The air pollutants addressed included:

- Nitrogen oxides
- Sulfur dioxides
- Carbon dioxide
- Mercury

Key conclusions drawn by EPA from the data include:

- 2021 emissions were higher than 2020 with the following individual results:
- Nitrogen oxide increased by 6%
- Sulfur dioxide increased by 20%
- Carbon dioxide emissions increased by 7%
- Mercury emissions increased by 13%
- 2021 emissions were between 3% and 11% lower than 2019

EPA suggests that the increase in 2021 emissions reflects:

. . . a rebound in coal-fired generation as natural gas prices and energy demand increase.

Long-term data is also referenced which indicates that annual emissions of sulfur dioxides from power plants fell by 94% between 1990 and 2021. Further, annual emissions from nitrogen oxides from power plants were reduced by 88% during the same period.

EPA concludes that the referenced long-term declines are due primarily to changes in the mix of fuels used in electricity generation.

A link to the report can be found [here](#).