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9.3 COMMON ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTANTS AND THEIR SOURCES

Combustion of fossil fuels

- Complete combustion produces carbon dioxide and water
- Incomplete combustion produces carbon particulates and carbon monoxide as well as water and carbon dioxide
  - Carbon monoxide
    - Prevents blood from carrying oxygen around the body
      - Can be fatal
    - Odourless and colourless
  - Carbon particulates (soot)
    - Cause respiratory problems if breathed in
    - Cause global dimming
      - Reflect sunlight back into space

Sulfur dioxide

- Fossil fuels containing sulfur impurities
- Sulfur dioxide released when these fuels burn
- These gases react with water vapour in clouds, causing acid rain
- Both cause respiratory problems

Oxides of nitrogen

- Nitrogen and oxygen react in the air in high temperatures
- High temperatures caused by burning of fossil fuels
- Acid rain kills plants, destroys habitats and damages buildings and statues

AQA

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