Study of Nova-Produced $^{22}$Na with COMPTEL

A. F. Iyudin, R. Diehl, V. Schönheder, A. Strong (MPE, Garching), H. Bloemen, W. Hermansen (SRON), J. Knödlseder (CESR (CNES/UPS)), J. Ryan (UNH), K. Bennett, C. Winkler (ESTEC)

After 8 years of the Compton Mission (CGRO) the COMPTEL telescope has achieved an MeV $\gamma$-ray line sensitivity of about $10^{-5}$ photons cm$^{-2}$s$^{-1}$. At this level of sensitivity quite high expectations can be placed on the detection of the predicted $^{22}$Na $\gamma$-ray line at 1.275 MeV from nearby novae. Classical novae provide an environment in which hydrogen-burning reactions proceed on CNO and heavier nuclei at high temperatures. For such conditions astrophysically significant fluxes of the $^{22}$Na $\gamma$-ray line are expected.

We have used all COMPTEL data collected till the 2nd CGRO reboost to update previously published limits for the sodium production by novae. Results of the $^{22}$Na line emission studies from the old and the most recent novae will be discussed and compared to the model predictions.