

diffraction

A modification which light (or electron, neutron beams, etc.) undergoes in passing by the edges of opaque bodies or through narrow slits or in being reflected from ruled surfaces (or crystalline materials). The light waves, owing to their wave-like nature appear to be deflected and produce fringes of parallel light and dark bands corresponding to regions of constructive reinforcement or destructive interference, respectively, of the waves.

Source:

PAC, 1990, 62, 2167 (*Glossary of atmospheric chemistry terms (Recommendations 1990)*) on page 2184