**Non-renewable and Renewable Resources**

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Scientists are exploring the practicality of other sources called renewable energy sources. These include sun, wind, geothermal, water, and biomass. The renewable energy resources are important in long range energy planning because they will not be depleted.

**Natural Gas**

Sometimes natural gas is confused with gasoline, the fuel in cars. They are not the same. Gasoline is a mixture of liquids, and natural gas is mainly methane and is piped into homes and office buildings where it is used as an energy source for heating, cooking washing, and drying. It is raw material to make other chemicals, and is the cleanest bumming fossil fuel. This means it contributes little environmental pollutants when burned.

**Petroleum or Oil**

This is the black, thick liquid pumped from below the earth's surface wherever you see an oil rig. To make it useful, it is refined. Refining separates the gasoline portion which is used in transportation. Products from the remaining portions include synthetic rubber, detergents, fertilizers, textiles, paints, and pharmaceuticals.

**Coal**

Coal is the most abundant fossil fuel. It is not a widely used energy source due to the cost of mining and its impurities, which cause pollution (acid rain). There are two ways to mine coal; underground mining and strip mining. Disadvantage to these methods is the environmental change caused in the process.

**Solar**

The sun is 93 million miles away and yet, this ball of hot gases is the primary source of all energy on earth. Without sunlight, fossil fuels could never have existed. The sun is the supplier of energy which runs the water cycle. The uneven heating of the earth produces wind energy. Solar energy can be used to cook food, heat water and generate electricity. It remains the cleanest energy source an it is renewable.

**Wind**

The unequal heating of the earth's surface by the sun produces wind energy, which can be converted into mechanical and electrical energy. For a long time, the energy of wind has been to drive pumps. Today windmills can be connected to electric generators to turn the wind's motion energy into electrical energy, and wind over 8 miles per hour can be used to generate electricity .It is a renewable, but unpredictable, energy source.

**Wood**

Wood provides homes and industries as much power as nuclear plants. Burning is the major global source of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Worldwide, wood provided 50-60% of the people with the barest energy necessities. Roughly half of the earth's forests have disappeared since 1950. Wood is considered a renewable energy source.

**Hydroelectric (Falling Water)**

When water is collected behind dams on large rivers, it provides a source of energy for the production of electricity. The enormous power of falling water is capable of turning giant turbines. These turbines drive the generators, which produce electricity. The degree of power is determined by the amount of water and the distance it falls. Water is a renewable energy source.

**Ocean Tides**

Ocean tides are very powerful forces. To harness the rising and falling of the tides would be an expensive process, but it would be a very important future source for Eastern United States. Perhaps underwater windmills or floating generating stations could utilize this potential energy source to produce electricity.