

get current switch on clean energy

EVERYBODY NEEDS POWER. But some of the ways we generate and use power can have a dramatic effect on the environment. This *Energy Awareness Activity Book* provides a number of clues and tips on how to make smart energy choices, save money, and reduce our impact on the environment. Before you begin, here are a few concepts to keep in mind.

Energy Literacy: Energy Literacy is an understanding of the nature and role of energy in our lives and the ability to apply this understanding to answer questions and solve problems. This activity book helps you to answer questions and understand energy.

Energy Efficiency: More than 90% of the energy we use comes from fossil fuels that are nonrenewable and cause pollution. One of the greatest energy resources we have at our fingertips is energy efficiency, or the energy that would otherwise be wasted. Choose the most energy-efficient equipment. Look for the ENERGY STAR[®] label.

Renewable Energy: Renewable energy does not pollute the environment and can be continually replenished. Here are some of the major renewable resources being used today:



Biomass is any organic material that can be burned or converted to ethanol or methane. Ethanol is used as a vehicle fuel, and methane is captured from decaying garbage and waste to produce energy.



Wind energy is used to turn the blades connected to a turbine to produce electricity. Many places have wind resources powerful and steady enough to harness.



Solar energy is the Sun's radiant energy that can be absorbed, stored, and released by substances or converted directly into electricity using photovoltaic (PV) cells.





Hydropower is one of the oldest power sources on the planet. Flowing water, directed through a dam or other structure, is used to spin a wheel or turbine to produce electricity or for mechanical tasks like grinding grain. Scientists and engineers are also working to develop new hydrokinetic technologies to produce electricity from the motion of waves, tides, and river or ocean currents.

www.energy.gov/kids

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What You Need to Know

Alternative-Fuel Vehicle (AFV) – A vehicle designed to operate on an alternative fuel (e.g., compressed natural gas, methane blend, electricity).

Bioenergy – Any organic (plant or animal) material which is available on a renewable basis.

Energy – The ability to do work or the ability to move an object. Electrical energy is usually measured in kilowatt hours (kWh), while heat energy is usually measured in British thermal units (Btu).

Energy Efficiency – Activities aimed at reducing the energy used by substituting technically more advanced equipment, typically without affecting the services provided.

Energy Literacy – An understanding of the nature and role of energy in our lives and the ability to apply this understanding to answer questions and solve problems.

Ethanol – A colorless liquid that burns to produce water and carbon dioxide. The vapor forms an explosive mixture with air and may be used as a fuel in internal combustion engines.

Fossil Fuels – Fuels (coal, oil, natural gas, etc.) that result from the compression of ancient plant and animal life formed underground over millions of years.

Generator – A device that turns mechanical energy into electrical energy. The mechanical energy is sometimes provided by an engine or turbine.

Geothermal Energy – Heat energy that is produced by natural processes inside the Earth. It can be taken from hot springs, and reservoirs of hot water deep below the surface of the Earth.

Hydrogen – A colorless, orderless, high flammable gaseous element. The lightest of all gasses and the most abundant element in the universe.

Hydropower – Energy that comes from moving water, including water from rivers or reservoirs flowing through dams, ditches or canals. Kilowatt – A unit of power, usually used for electric power or energy consumption (use). A kilowatt equals 1000 watts.

Lumen – A unit of measurement for the amount of light emitted by a light bulb. The number of lumens a bulb emits indicates the amount of light it emits.

Nonrenewable – Fuels that cannot be easily made or "renewed"; oil, natural gas, and coal.

Nuclear Energy – Energy that comes from splitting atoms or radioactive materials, such as uranium.

Petroleum – Refers to crude oil or the refined products obtained from the processing of crude oil (gasoline, diesel fuel, heating oil, etc.).

Photovoltaic Cells – A device, usually made from silicon, which converts some of the energy from light (radiant energy) into electrical energy.

Power – The rate at which energy is transferred. Electrical energy is usually measured in watts.

Renewable Energy – Energy obtained from sources that are virtually inexhaustible (defined in terms of comparison to the lifetime of the Sun) and replenish naturally over small time scales relative to the human life span.

Solar Energy – Radiant energy of the Sun that is converted into other forms of energy, such as heat or electricity.

Sustainable – Able to be maintained at a steady level without exhausting natural resources or causing severe ecological damage, as in a behavior or practice.

Turbine – A device whose blades, turned by a force like wind, water, or high pressure steam, has its mechanical energy converted into electricity by a generator.

Waste Energy – Municipal solid waste, landfill fas, methane, digester gas, paper pellets, sludge waste, solid byproducts, tires, agricultural byproducts, and straw used as fuel.

Wind – The term given to any natural movement of air in the atmosphere; a renewable source of energy used to turn turbines to generate electricity.

Cool Web Sites!

Climate and Energy Awareness Network Activities for Kids www.cleanet.org

U.S. Department of Energy Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy www.energy.gov/kids

Energy Educations Activities www.eere.energy.gov/education/lessonplans/ Energy Literacy Fundamental Principles and Essential Concepts

www.eere.energy.gov/energyliteracy Energy Information Administration

"Energy Kids" www.eia.gov/kids/



Energy Star[®] Kids www.energystar.gov/kids

