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Scientists are always on the lookout for alternative sources of energy.

科学家总是在寻找替代能源。

Today we're going to discuss one that's so plentiful they say it could supply more energy than all the coal and oil in the world.

今天我们将探讨一种如此充足的，他们说能够提供比世界上所有的煤炭和石油更多的能量。

It's found in something called gas hydrate and, believe it or not, that's a kind of ice.

它被发现于某种叫做气体水合物（的东东）而且，信不信由你，那是一种冰。

That's right. But the water in this ice was way down below the Earth's surface when it was frozen, so it was under a lot of pressure.

是的，但是在这种冰里的水在当它结冰时会降到地球表面下很深（的地方），所以它会在很大的压力之下（所以压力很大）。

And trapped inside the crystals of ice are individual molecules of methane --- that's what's in natural gas.

被困在冰的晶体中的是单个的甲烷分子——这就是天然气。

All this makes gas hydrate pretty strange stuff.

所有这些（状况）使得气体水合物（成为）很诡异的东西。

If you touch a match to a piece of this ice, it'll burst into flame.

如果你把一根火柴接触到这样的一块冰上，它将一下子燃烧起来。

And when geologists bring a chunk of it up to the surface to study at normal air pressure and temperature, gas hydrate begins to hiss and bubble, and in less than half an hour, the ice melts and the methane inside escapes into the air.

当地质学家把一大块这种冰带到（地球）表面上来研究时，在正常气压和温度下，气体水合物开始嘶嘶冒泡，在不到半个小时（的时间里），冰就融化了，里面的甲烷逸入空气中。

Now, as you might guess, this can make gas hydrate kind of hard for miners to handle.

现在，像你们可能猜到的，这使气体水合物对于矿工来说有点难以处理。

And then there's the problem of where it's located in frozen arctic regions or in ocean waters off the Atlantic coast, and up to a mile down.

然后就是它所处的位置的问题，在冰冻的北极地区，或者在离开大西洋海岸达一英里的海水中。

Environmentalists warn that mining it could even be disastrous.

环境专家警告说开采它甚至可能是灾难性的。

Offshore drilling could allow seawater to seep down into the huge icy deposits and release tons of methane up into the atmosphere.

离岸钻探可能会然海水渗入庞大的冰冻沉积物，并且释放无数的甲烷上来进入空气中。

And methane, our listeners may recall, is a greenhouse gas that could really worsen the problem of global warming.

甲烷，咱们听众应该能想起来，是一种温室气体，真的可以使全球变暖的问题更加恶化。

So, gas hydrate may offer some interesting possibilities.

因此，气体水合物可能提供一些令人关注的发展可能性。

But, with all these drawbacks, I'm not going to hold my breath waiting for it to fuel my furnace.

但是，随着所有的这些缺点，我不会屏住我的呼吸来等待它燃烧我的炉子。