

## Energy Sources and Energy Politics

- Americans are used to getting their energy cheaply and easily. It has become hard to meet the needs of modern lifestyle while preserving the environment.
- America depends on 41% Oil, 23% Natural Gas, 23% Coal, 8% Nuclear and only 5% Alternative sources of energy to supply nationwide power.
- Coal is the most abundant source of energy found in America. However, it is also very messy, responsible for “black lung” and a known contributor to acid rain . Although it is very abundant, Americans do not like being reliant on it.
- Oil is the the most used source of energy in the United States today. Although we only have 2% of the its world supply, we consume over a quarter of its production every year.
- 80% of the world’s oil supply is found in the Middle East. Most of these countries ( namely Saudi Arabia and Iraq ) have joined to form the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries(OPEC) which controls most of the world’s oil.
- Nuclear Energy was a promising alternative at the end of WW2. Nuclear scientists claimed it would produce energy “too cheap to meter”. However, skepticism hit the masses after accidents such as Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania and Chernobyl in the former Soviet Union.

Reserves		Consumption		
	Billion Barrels	Reserve Share	Million Barrels / Day	Share
United States	22	2%	19.6	26%
OPEC	814.5	79%	5.7	7%
Rest of The World	191.6	19%	50.7	67%

## The Global Warming Debate Heats Up

- When fossil fuels burn they produce Carbon Dioxide. It accumulate in the atmosphere creating another layer of insulation, thus causing climate to heat. Likewise, energy from the sun and ultraviolet rays get caught on Earth’s atmosphere which also causes rising temperatures. This phenomenon is better known as the “Greenhouse Effect”.
- Since there is no technology that can control carbon dioxide emissions, our only alternatives are to burn Less fuels or find Alternative Sources of energy.
- In 1997, 150 nations met in Kyoto, Japan to solve the problem. They agreed they must lower emission levels below that of 1990 fo 34 Industrial Nations By 2010. This event became known as the Kyoto Treaty.

- The United State, having only 4% of the world's population, produces over 20% of gases that cause global warming.
- Carbon Dioxide can remain on Earth's atmosphere for as long as 100yrs, making it difficult to measure the effectiveness of any policy.