

## Vocabulary: Energy Sources

- Acid precipitation – precipitation, such as rain or snow, that contains acids due to air pollution.
- Biomass – organic materials, such as wood, vegetable oils, and animal wastes, that contain stored energy.
  - Biomass can be converted into liquid fuels, including ethanol and biodiesel.
- Energy consumption – the amount of energy that is used.
  - A common unit of energy consumption is the kilowatt-hour, or kWh. A 60-watt light bulb consumes 0.06 kilowatt-hours of energy in one hour.
  - To calculate energy consumption, multiply *wattage* by usage, which is the amount of time an electrical device is used.
- Fossil fuel – a fuel formed deep in Earth's crust from the remains of plants and animals.
  - Fossil fuels include coal, petroleum (oil), and natural gas.
- Geothermal energy – energy produced by heat radiating from Earth's core.
- Global warming – a gradual rise in Earth's average temperature.
  - Most scientists believe the current global warming experienced by Earth is caused by the emission of gases such as carbon dioxide and methane.
- Hydropower – electricity produced by water flowing through a turbine.
- Nonrenewable – a natural resource that cannot be replaced reasonably soon.
  - Fossil fuels and uranium are nonrenewable resources.
- Nuclear power – electricity produced by harnessing the energy released when the nuclei of atoms are split apart.
- Radiation – particles and/or energy emitted by a decaying atom.
  - Radiation can damage human tissues and cause diseases such as cancer.
- Renewable – a natural resource that can be replaced in a reasonable amount of time.
  - Wind energy, solar energy, hydropower, and biomass are renewable resources.
- Smog – a toxic fog produced when sunlight reacts with certain kinds of air pollutants.
  - Smog is linked with several respiratory diseases including bronchitis.
- Solar energy – energy from the Sun.
  - Solar cells on solar panels are used to convert solar energy into electricity.

- Strip mining – a mining process in which large areas of rock and soil are stripped away from Earth's surface in order to expose underlying resources, such as coal.
- Wattage – the electrical power consumed by a device.
  - Units of wattage include the watt (W) and kilowatt (kW). A kilowatt is 1,000 watts.
- Wind energy – energy from wind.
  - Wind turbines are used to convert wind energy into electricity.