

PETROLEUM



PETROLEUM is formed from animals and plants that lived millions of years ago when heat and pressure turned decayed matter into crude oil. It is a part of the fossil fuels family, found underground or under seabed floor by drilling. It is then transported to refineries and distilled into fuel or base chemical products.

PROS

- Transportation fuel for the world
- Basis of many products, from prescription drugs to plastics
- Economical to produce, easy to transport

CONS

- High CO₂ emissions
- Found in limited areas
- Supply may be exhausted before natural gas and coal resources
- Possible environmental impact from drilling and transporting



nonrenewable



PROPANE (LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS or LPG) is produced as a byproduct from natural gas processing and crude oil refining. A part of the fossil fuels family, the components recovered during processing include ethane, propane, and butane as well as heavier hydrocarbons. Propane has been made safer by adding artificial odor, so people can easily smell the gas if it leaks. It burns hotter and more evenly than other fuels.

PROS

- Yields 60–70% less smog-producing hydrocarbons than gasoline/diesel fuel or propane exhaust
- Nontoxic and insoluble in water
- Doesn't spill, pool, or leave a residue
- Appliances pay for themselves via energy savings more quickly

CONS

- Uses some fossil fuels in conversion
- Highly flammable
- Costs prone to seasonal price fluctuations that complicate fuel cost budgeting
- Less energy in a gallon of propane than in a gallon of gasoline or diesel fuel

PROPANE



nonrenewable

NATURAL GAS



NATURAL GAS consists primarily of methane but includes significant quantities of ethane, butane, propane, carbon dioxide, nitrogen, helium, and hydrogen sulfide. It is a part of the fossil fuels family and found underground by drilling. It is then transported by tankers or pipelines as liquefied natural gas.

PROS

- Widely available
- Burns more cleanly than coal or oil
- Often used in combination with other fuels to decrease pollution in electricity generation

CONS

- Transportation costs are high; lack of infrastructure makes gas resources unavailable from some areas
- Burns cleanly, but still has emissions
- Pipelines impact ecosystems



nonrenewable



COAL is formed from trees and plants in vast primeval forests, when heat and pressure turned decayed matter into coal. Coal is a part of the fossil fuels family.

PROS

- Abundant supply
- Currently inexpensive to extract
- Reliable and capable of generating large amounts of power

CONS

- Emits major greenhouse gases/acid rain
- High environmental impact from mining and burning, although cleaner coal-burning technology is being developed
- Mining can be dangerous for miners

COAL



nonrenewable