

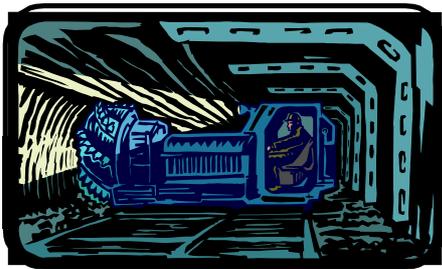
Fact File



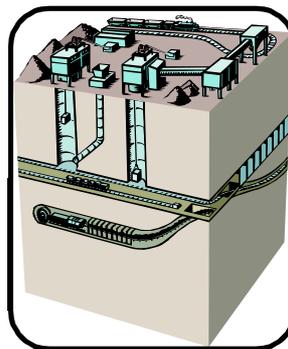
What we need to know about ENERGY

Nearly all the energy used in the world comes from **fossil fuels**. These are mostly gas, oil and coal. They are used directly to give us power, or are used to manufacture electricity. They were made naturally thousands of years ago and are buried beneath the ground. There is a limited amount of all three. When all the gas, coal and oil have been used up there will be no more. Experts tell us that this will happen within the next 100 years. Some scientists predict that it will be sooner. Over the last 50 years the amount of fossil fuel being used has increased more and more. It is still increasing at an alarming rate.

COAL



Coal is dug from underground mines. Until 1950 it was the chief fuel for power stations, ships, trains and heating. It has many by-products: paints, plastics, fertilisers and chemicals.

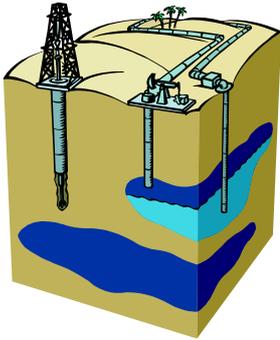


Coal is used for making electricity in power stations. Globally there are more reserves of coal than any other fossil fuel.

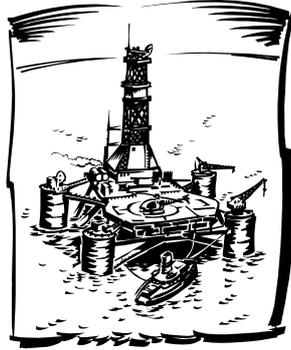


Burning coal produces gases such as carbon dioxide (CO_2), one of the 'greenhouse gases' that causes global warming. Global warming is now recognised as a major threat to the world.

OIL and GAS



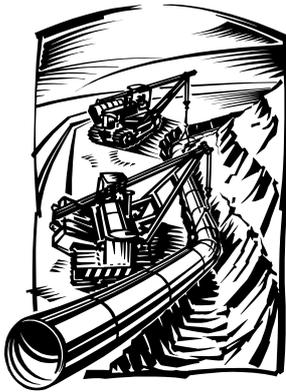
Both gas and oil are found in large underground reservoirs and need to be pumped or drilled out.



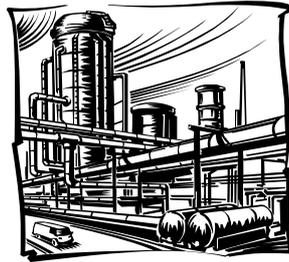
Often these reserves are under the sea so a platform is built and the oil transported by tanker.



World oil consumption has risen from 11 million barrels a day in 1950 to 65 million barrels a day now.



Across land the fuel is conveyed through huge pipes, or in tanker lorries.



Many things are made from oil: Petrol, aircraft and train fuel, plastics and nylon all come from oil. Most oil reserves are in the Middle East.



There is a real danger of oil spillage, and there have been many bad accidents. Wildlife over large expanses of sea has been badly affected.



We are very quickly using up the supplies of fuel. All these fossil fuels release large amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere as they are burned and this contributes to global warming.