

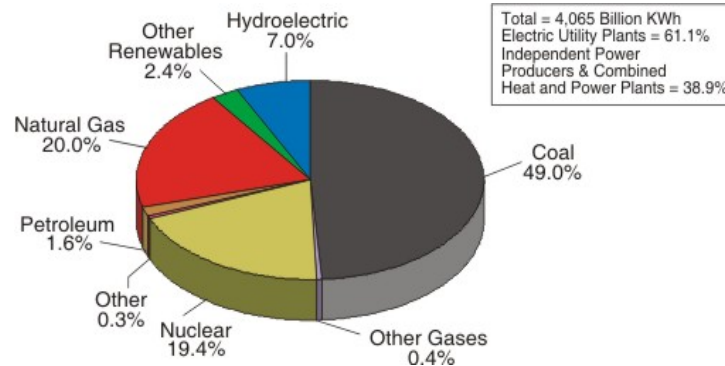


Conservation of food, water, gas, and electricity is no longer a “feel good” option; it has become a NEED to do. Numerous statistics and scientific analysis indicates our rate of consumption is not sustainable in this world of growing population.

We have shared numerous tips on conserving energy in past issues (<http://kai.home.att.net/html/bg00804.html>) this month, we will share additional tips to reduce electricity use and provide incentives to produce renewable electricity.

If your electricity supplier offers off-peak pricing programs (<http://www.env-econ.net/2007/12/peak-electricit.html>), take advantage of them. It may only save you \$5 a month, but the implication is order of magnitude.

When large number of customers uses electricity off peak, the utility companies don't need to produce “peak power”, which usually burns natural gas. In the Washington DC area, Pepco (<http://www.pepco.com/welcome/news/releases/archives/2008/article.aspx?cid=1000>) and Dominion (<http://www.dom.com/customer/efficiency/programs.jsp>) has pilot Smart Metering programs. The Smart Metering program will automatically adjust your electricity consumption based on overall electricity demand. This will allow the utility company to manage demand more efficiently.



Only 2.4% of the Electricity generated in the United States is from renewable sources, such as Wind, Solar, Wave, Biomass, ...etc. China, the world's leading renewable energy producer, (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renewable_energy) generates over 7% of the country's electricity from renewable sources. Second only to Germany, China invests over \$12 billion USD / year in renewable energy research and deployment (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_policy_of_China#Electricity_generation).

To encourage R&D and Deployment of renewable energy in the United States, we need to buy electricity generated from renewable sources. Dominion power, offers it customers the option to purchase Green energy (http://www.dom.com/customer/efficiency/vares_greenpower.jsp), we have signed up for it, so should you! Yes, it cost a little more, but you will be DOING your share to encourage renewable electricity production in the United States.

These steps will cost more upfront in terms of comfort and dollars; however, as with any investment, there are costs to bear. Heat our houses to 68 rather than 75F in the winter will make us less comfortable; paying \$10~\$20 more per month to use Renewable Electricity will leave us less money for fun. These are the tough choices President Obama's have told us we have to make. “Each day brings further evidence that the ways we use energy strengthen our adversaries and threaten our planet”. OUR problems, WE have to solve it together. We are willing to pay a little more for electricity and put on more cloth in the winter. How about you?

Check with your local utilities and see if they offer smart metering, off-peak pricing, as well as option to purchase Renewable Electricity.