Energy Sources

*Energy*

The ability to cause change.

*Energy Resource*

A source or supply of energy that can be used to generate electrical power to meet people’s needs.

*Renewable*

An energy resource such as trees or wind that is replaceable by natural means.

*Nonrenewable*

An energy resource that takes millions of years to form from the remains of plants and animals, such as coal, oil, and natural gas.

*Fossil Fuel*

A natural non-renewable fuel such as coal, oil, or natural gas formed over a very long time in the geological past from the remains of living organisms.

*Coal*

A hard, black, solid fuel formed from the remains of plants over millions of years and extracted from the ground; a nonrenewable fossil fuel.

*Petroleum (Oil)*

A flammable, yellow-to-black liquid composed of hydrocarbons occurring naturally beneath Earth’s

surface; a nonrenewable fossil fuel processed to make gasoline used in vehicles.

*Natural Gas*

A gas, usually found in the ground positioned above petroleum deposits, that is burned to obtain energy; a nonrenewable fossil fuel.

*Nuclear Power*

The splitting of uranium atoms to release energy. Uranium is found in some minerals and is classified as a nonrenewable natural resource.

*Biomass*

Biological material such as plant material or animal waste converted to a usable energy source; a renewable resource.

*Wind Energy*

Turbines harness the movement of air and convert it to useable energy; wind energy is a renewable resource.

*Hydropower*

Movement of water through a dam in a river is converted to useable energy; hydropower is a renewable resource.

*Geothermal Energy*

Heat is harnessed from deep beneath Earth’s surface and converted to useable energy; geothermal energy is a renewable resource.

*Solar Resources*

The Sun’s energy is collected and converted to useable energy; solar energy is a renewable resource.

*Pollution*

The presence of harmful or unwanted levels of material in the environment.

*Landfill*

Disposal site for solid waste.

*Greenhouse Gases*

Greenhouse gases are gases in an atmosphere that absorb and retain heat energy. In moderation these gases insulate a planet from extreme temperature variations; high amounts cause air pollution and overheat the planet.

*Recycling*

Reduce: Make smart purchasing decisions that result in less waste and packaging.

Reuse: Find ways to reuse containers and products.

Recycle: Properly dispose of used resources so they can be reprocessed into new products.

*Conservation*

Efforts to wisely use, distribute, and protect valuable resources such as fresh water, soil, unique environments, and energy resources, as well as natural and human-made materials.