Energy Definitions

DEFINITIONS

Energy is the ability to do work. It is stored in various forms including chemical energy in biomass, coal and oil, nuclear energy in uranium, gravitational energy in water used in hydroelectric plants, the wind and the sun.

There are two common ways to account for energy use; **resource energy** consumption and **end-use** energy consumption. End-use refers to the energy content of electricity and other fuels at the point of use by customers. Resource energy includes all energy resources used to generate electricity, including the energy content of the coal, petroleum, nuclear and renewable fuels.

One **British thermal unit (Btu)** is the amount of energy in the form of heat which will raise the temperature of one pound of water one degree Fahrenheit.

One **calorie** is the amount of energy in the form of heat which will raise the temperature of one gram of water one degree Centigrade.

One **Btu** is equal to 252 calories.

One **watt** is a unit of power, or rate of energy delivery, of one joule per second, or equivalently, one ampere of electric current delivered across a potential of one volt. One kilowatt (kW) is 1,000 watts. Ten 100-watt light bulbs require 1,000 watts or 1 kW of power to stay lit at any point in time.

One **kilowatt-hour (kWh)** is one kilowatt of electric power delivered for one hour (or the equivalent). One kilowatt-hour is 1,000 watt-hours. Ten 100-watt light bulbs burning for one hour consume 1,000 watt-hours or 1 kWh.

Heating degree days are relative measurements of outdoor air temperature and are obtained by subtracting the mean daily temperature from an established base temperature of 65 degrees Fahrenheit.

Cooling degree days are relative measurements of outdoor air temperature and are obtained by subtracting an established base temperature of 65 degrees Fahrenheit from the mean daily temperature.

MEASUREMENT OF ENERGY SUPPLIES

Petroleum products are measured in either gallons or barrels. A barrel contains 42 gallons. Petroleum is refined from crude oil into various products such as kerosene, diesel fuel, home heating oil (No. 1 and No. 2 oils), and other heating oils (No. 3 - No. 6), gasoline and liquefied petroleum gas (propane). The energy content of a gallon of each product is listed in the conversion table.

Natural Gas is measured in either Mcf (1,000 cubic feet) or in therms. One Mcf contains approximately ten therms or one million Btu.

Coal is measured in tons. The three broad classifications of coal, in order of greatest energy content, are bituminous, sub-bituminous and lignite.

Wood is usually measured in either tons or cords. A cord is an amount of stacked wood measuring 8 feet x 4 feet x 4 feet. The weight of a cord of wood varies according to the type of wood and its moisture content, but is estimated at 1.5 to 2 tons. A face cord is the 8 feet x 4 feet face of a stacked cord but of shorter width. Common usage is three face cords to a full cord.

Conversion Factors

AVERAGE ENERGY CONTENT OF VARIOUS FUELS

1 kilowatt-hour of electricity	3,413 Btu
1 cubic foot of natural gas	1,008 to 1,034 Btu
1 therm of natural gas	100,000 Btu
1 gallon of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG)	95,475 Btu
1 gallon of crude oil	138,095 Btu
1 barrel of crude oil	5,800,000 Btu
1 gallon of kerosene or light distillate oil	135,000 Btu
1 gallon of middle distillate or diesel fuel oil	138,690 Btu
1 gallon of residual fuel oil	149,690 Btu
1 gallon of gasoline	125,000 Btu
1 gallon of ethanol	84,400 Btu
1 gallon of methanol	62,800 Btu
1 gallon of gasohol (10% ethanol, 90% gasoline)	120,900 Btu
1 pound of coal	8,100 to 13,000 Btu
1 ton of coal	16,200,000 to 26,000,000 Btu
1 ton of coke	26,000,000 Btu
1 ton of wood	9,000,000 to 17,000,000 Btu
1 standard cord of wood	18,000,000 to 24,000,000 Btu
1 face cord of wood	6,000,000 to 8,000,000 Btu
1 pound of low pressure steam (recoverable heat)	1,000 Btu

MEASUREMENT CONVERSIONS

1 short ton (ton) = 2,000 pounds = 6.65 barrels (crude oil)
1 metric ton (tonn) = 2,200 pounds
1 barrel (bbl) = 42 gallons = 5.615 cubic feet = 159.0 liters
1 Mcf = 1,000 cubic feet
1 therm = 10^5 Btu = 100,000 Btu
1 thousand Btu (KBtu) = 1,000 Btu
1 million Btu (MMBtu) = 1,000,000 Btu
1 quad = 10^{15} (quadrillion) Btu or 1,000,000,000 MMBtu
1 kilowatt-hour (kWh) = 1,000 watt-hours
1 megawatt-hour (MWh) = 1,000 kWh or 1,000,000 watt-hours
1 gigawatt-hour (GWh) = 1,000 MWh or 1,000,000,000 watt-hours
1 gallon = 4.524 pounds liquefied petroleum gas
1 standard cord of wood = 8 feet x 4 feet x 4 feet = 128 cubic feet = approx. 3,000-4,000 lbs.
1 face cord of wood = 8 feet x 4 feet x 16 inches = 42.7 cubic feet = approx. 1,333 lbs.