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RENEWABLE RESOURCES

It's the new thing, renewable resources! Renewable resources are definitely the cleaner, greener choice. There are five main renewable resources. They are solar power, wind power, hydropower, geothermal power and biomass power.

A renewable resource is a resource that can be renewed in a lifetime. Non-renewable resources can be renewed, just not in a human's lifetime. So, you can use up a non-renewable resource. This is why you should use renewable resources. Also, renewable resources are better for the environment and the atmosphere.

One renewable resource is wind power. Wind power is when wind powers a generator of some sort. The way wind powers a generator is by a huge windmill. Big windmills are put in places where there is normally a lot of wind. When the wind blows, it turns the big, metal windmill, which powers a generator.

Places such as Pensacola, Florida, do not have a lot of wind that can power a generator. So, not much wind power is used here. But, certain places in Texas get tons of wind. In places like Texas, there are things call "wind farms". A wind farm is a place where there is plenty of wind and hundreds of windmills. In Texas, for example, most of their renewable resources come from wind power.

A place like Pensacola may not get a lot of wind, but there are a lot of beaches. Hydropower may be a good renewable energy choice for a place like this. Hydropower is a lot like wind power. A windmill sort of thing is placed underwater. Then, when a current comes or water moves strong enough, it turns the underwater windmill. When the windmill moves fast enough it can power a generator.

For towns and cities with many lakes, oceans, rivers, and bodies of water, hydropower is a good choice because Earth will never run out of water. This is because of the water cycle. Places such as a desert would not run well with hydropower. Deserts normally are very dry and have no water.

Geothermal power is power that comes from energy heat stored up inside of the earth, at its core. Inside the earth, when temperatures inside the earth get hotter than the sun's surface, it slows the decay of radio active materials. Tons of people use geothermal energy around the world. They use geothermal energy to heat their homes and produce electricity. People do this by digging extremely deep wells and pumping the hot underground water to the surface.

This kind of power is released, not only when humans capture it, but when natural things occur. Volcanoes, fumaroles, hot springs and geysers release geothermal energy. Most geothermal resources are near plate boundaries. Geothermal energy found in the United States is in the western states and Hawaii. So, if you live in a city like Natchez, Mississippi, geothermal energy may not be the best renewable energy choice for you, since you live in the southeast. But if you live in Montana, geothermal energy may be the renewable resource for you!

Solar power is yet another renewable energy source. Solar energy comes from the sun. To get solar energy, you have to have a lot of sunshine. Things called solar panels capture this energy for you to use. The only drawbacks of solar energy are the amount of sunlight is not always constant and because the sun does not give off that much energy at one time, big solar panels are needed.

Solar power is found anywhere there is solar energy. Solar energy is found anywhere the sun radiates. You can find sun almost anywhere. Some places have more sunshine than others. For example, California has more solar energy than any other state.

Biomass is a renewable resource tool. We get biomass energy from living things like plants and animals. It comes from the process of photosynthesis, when plants convert water, carbon dioxide and sunlight into energy. Biomass energy is found in wood, crops, manure and sometimes garbage. When this is burned, it releases this energy and humans capture it. This energy makes electricity, or heating for homes and industries.

Even though it may seem like biomass energy is easy to get (and it is) only 4% of our nation's energy is biomass. The only thing that is old news to people is burning wood. Most people don't burn the other sources for biomass energy! Each different form of biomass has a different effect on the world.

If you do choose a non-renewable resource, natural gas is the way to go! Natural gas is methane. It is made when fossils and minerals build up and make gas. We capture this gas by using seismic surveys and finding out where the gas is. Once we know where the gas is, we can drill for natural gas.

So, it's cleaner, it's greener, and less harmful to the environment and will never run out! Why wouldn't you choose renewable resources?! It is obviously, the cleaner, greener choice!