

ENERGY-IT MAKES IT ALL HAPPEN

**By
Richard Sorokin**

Everything that we do involves the use of energy. How we have learned to harness energy is the story of life on Earth and civilization.

When our planet was first formed it was a hot barren rock. As it cooled, gases formed and created our atmosphere. It rained for hundreds of years. The water rained down, hit the hot planet, evaporated back into the atmosphere, formed clouds and rained again. This went on until the Earth cooled enough that water could exist on the planet's surface. Oceans, lakes, rivers were created. Our sun, through all this, poured its energy out into space. Only a very small portion of it landed on the planet Earth.

This energy started to create weather on the planet and an atmosphere. Energy at this time came and went. There was no way to store energy except in hot rocks and warmer atmosphere.

The miracle of life arrived in the form of simple plants. Plants can convert sun energy to storable chemicals. Plants thrived and diversified into all kinds of plant life. They adapted to their environment and survived.

One cell animal life came next. Somehow, it branched off of one cell plant life. These new cells had no means to convert sun light to energy packed chemicals. They had to get their energy from the plants and they consumed them. Animals use a great deal more energy than plants. To survive animals must take in energy on a daily basis. Animals learned that some plants store more energy than others and that certain parts of plants contain more energy. Seeds, flowers, roots and fruits store large amounts of energy. Some animals found that plant eating animals also are a good supply of energy and became carnivores. All life depends on the energy coming from our star we call the Sun.

We humans are at the top of the energy pyramid. Our use of energy comes from many sources. Everything we do involves the use of energy: eating, energy for living, moving, thinking, talking, etc. Heating our homes, motor transportation, communication, lighting all use energy. We humans use more energy per individual than any other species. The higher level of our civilization can be measured by the amount of energy consumed by each individual. Primitive people used very little energy compared to us.

A lot of our problems today are about energy, how to get it, and how to use it in a safe manner. Looking back in history you'll find most wars were fought about energy sources. In the early days it was about food sources, land and farming rights. Then it was about wealth and money which could buy energy sources. Today it is about control of oil energy. Tomorrow it will be about nuclear energy, or is it already here?