

Alternative Energy Essay by Heidi DiPersio

Have you ever wondered if we, as Americans, use the energy that is most healthy for our planet? What if wind or solar power would be better? We need to start turning to alternative energy sources like those because greenhouse gases are warming up the planet. A way to help this problem locally would be to use solar energy in Marlborough. Let's learn more about alternative energies, and why we need to use them.

We need to use more alternative energies because the Earth is getting hotter. This is because humans have been burning fossil fuels which give off coal, oil, natural gas. When these are burned they give off carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that stays in our atmosphere, heating it, for 500-1000 years. Another reason why this is occurring is global warming. Fossil fuels are remains of plants and animals that have decayed underground over millions of years. Now let's look at what can help stop all this.

Using alternative energies is our solution to global warming! One type of alternative energy is solar. This is energy from the sun harnessed using solar panels and other methods. In an article by the countryside and smalltalk Journal it stats "New solar powered back-up provides instant electrical power in any outage or disaster." This is saying that a newly invented solar powered generator can give you electricity when the regular power goes out, like in a storm. This is an earth-friendly, efficient way of getting solar power. "When power runs out your left with whatever gas you have on hand because the gas station pumps all run on electricity." That is another great perk to solar power generators. With a gas one you may not get a constant supply of power, since the gas stations may not be able to pump gas if they don't have electricity.

The new solar powered one can give you power from a constant supply all day, then use saved power when it gets dark. “You can use your solar backup to run essential appliances when emergencies arise... if you need to work in the woods at a cabin or in a boat, you can use the solar backup to run power tools, trimmers, blowers, and coffee makers.” Gas powered generators are hopeless when it comes to being mobile. They can’t go anywhere! Solar generators on the other hand are easy enough to move, so you can have power anywhere. Singapore has found that another way to harness solar power is with solar panels that hang on artificial trees. “The trees... absorb heat to protect people from Singapore’s searing temperatures.” Not only do the solar panels generate power, they also keep people safe from high temperatures by taking in heat. Those were a few of the many uses of solar power, and why it is good. What other alternative energies are there? Let’s find out.

Wind is not only a great cool-down on a hot summer day, but it also a great cool-down to our environment. The next alternative energy that we are going to look at, as I’m sure you could guess, is wind energy. Wind energy is power that is generated from wind. “To build a suitable energy future, we will have to start relying a lot more on other... energy sources: wind.” It is very important that we start using wind power, among other healthy sources, to have a good future. “Wind energy... hard to do successfully with practice.” Even with much practice it can be very challenging to harness wind power in a usable way. A company called LIPA can’t afford to keep their wind farms, and since wind power works no better than other alternative sources they have decided to “shelf”, or put away, the idea of wind energy for now. “The cost in wind farm is a driving factor in its exclusion.” Wind power, even though it doesn’t even work one-hundred percent of the time, wind power costs a lot, which is a main reason for the drop in

use of wind farms. Wind energy has a lot of flaws, but everything does, right? We'll now look at which alternative energy source (solar or wind) would be better for Marlborough to use.

Of the two alternative energies that we looked at I believe that solar energy would be better for Marlborough to use. The reasons that I made this choice were from the weather here, as well as the many flaws that wind power has. The sun is out a lot in Marlborough. Even though the weather can be unpredictable, even when it pours we have sun, and if we don't it isn't cloudy for long. Wind power isn't cheap. In the current economy no one has extra money to throw around, and wind power isn't the way to spend a limited amount if we can use solar power, a much cheaper alternative energy. Wind power is also hard to complete successfully, and takes a lot of concentration to keep going. There are a lot of people who work very hard to keep our town running smoothly, and it isn't easy. We could put in the artificial trees like Singapore did, "the artificial trees are fitted with solar panels to convert sunlight into energy." These trees could be put in to our town, and then left alone, leaving the town with time to work on other things.

In conclusion, there are many types of energy sources, some are bad for our planet, some are good for it, some are expensive, some are cheap, but only one is good for our community. I hope that in the near future we start implementing ideas into Marlborough that can help reduce global warming, and give us a good future. We need to start caring and saving the planet. The time to do it is now!

Works Cited:

1. Amazing Solar Generator is like having a Secret Power Plant Hidden inside Your Home!

Countryside and Smallstalk Journal

Nov/Dec 2012

Walters, Mike

2. Bright Idea

Middle Search Plus

10/1/12

(No author listed)

3. Earth, Wind, and Water

Discover

November 2012

Powell, Eric

4. Low gas costs could kill LIPA wind plans

Newsday

October 22, 2012

(No author given)