Current Events

How Does the United States Govern Energy? Fossil Fuels

Nuclear Power

Nuclear power emerged after World War II, led by the U.S. federal government

US Navy Admiral Hyman Rickover: A policy entrepreneur who promoted a nuclear navy & a nuclear energy industry to power it

Rickover built an “iron triangle” of support for nuclear power consisting of:
Bureaucracy (The Atomic Energy Commission), Congress (Joint Committee on Atomic Energy), and private interests (Westinghouse, General Electric)

How about liability for accidental damage?

Congress passed the Price Amendment (1957)
- limits the liability of private power companies

1975: Nuclear Power reached the height of its popularity
But highly publicized accidents generated a negative issue-attention cycle.

- 1979: Three Mile Island
- 1986: Chernobyl
- 2011: Fukushima

Lasting problems with nuclear power

- Technical Problems – Humans run nuclear power
- Economic Problems
- Security problems
- Nuclear Waste

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**Nuclear Waste**

Radioactive waste from World War II weapons production

- Weldon Spring
- The West Lake Landfill

Disposing of Low-Level Waste

**Low-Level Nuclear Waste Compacts**

Disposing of High-Level Waste
On-site storage

Yucca Mountain

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**Renewable Energy**

The Political Geography

- Hydropower
  - The Tennessee Valley Authority
- Geothermal
- Wind Power
- Solar Power

  **The Ivanpah Solar Power Facility**

- Biomass

  The *Ethanol* issue