



talk about natural gas

April 2009

Natural gas facts

Natural gas is one of the cleanest burning fossil fuels.

Natural gas can form over time from almost any organic material. It is generally located deep underground in porous rock or trapped between more solid rock formations.

The first natural gas well was drilled in 1883 in a field near Medicine Hat, Alberta.

A gigajoule (GJ), a unit for measuring natural gas, is the energy equivalent of about 30 litres of gasoline.

The average Albertan household uses 135 GJs of natural gas a year.

Alberta produces about five trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of natural gas per year. This is enough natural gas to heat every home in Alberta for about 35 years.

Over 80 per cent of Canada's natural gas production is from Alberta.

In 2007, Alberta consumed 1.51 Tcf of natural gas. The rest was exported across Canada and to the United States.

Royalties to Alberta from natural gas and its byproducts are larger than royalties from crude oil and bitumen.

In 2007-08, the \$11.44 billion in non-renewable resource revenue accounted for over 30 per cent of government revenue. In 2007-08, natural gas and by-product revenue was \$5.38 billion, or approximately 14 per cent of government revenue.

In 2007, there were 9,971 successful natural gas wells drilled in Alberta: 9,220 conventional gas wells and 751 coalbed methane wells.

Coalbed methane (CBM) is natural gas found in coal seams. It is still in the early stages of development in Alberta and may help meet the growing demand for natural gas.

There may be up to 500 Tcf of CBM in Alberta, although it is unknown how much of this gas might be recoverable.

According to Statistics Canada, Alberta residential consumers paid approximately 30 per cent less before rebates for their natural gas than the average Canadian in other provinces in 2007. After factoring in rebates, Alberta residential consumers paid approximately 40 per cent less.

Alberta has one of the most extensive natural gas systems in the world as part of its energy infrastructure, with 392,000 kilometres of energy related pipelines.