

Fold

Fuel

Material that is used to produce heat, like coal, oil or gas.



Finite

Something that has a limited number of uses before it is depleted. For example, oil is a finite resource.



Crude oil

Mixture of hydrocarbons, mainly alkanes, formed over millions of years from the remains of ancient dead marine organisms.

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Sterilise

To kill any living organisms, usually microbes that might cause disease, on an object or in a substance.



Desalination

The removal of salt from water. This is an energy-intensive process. Also known as desalinisation.



Distillation

A separation technique which involves a solution being heated so that the solvent evaporates before being cooled to form a pure liquid.

Natural resources

Minerals that have been made through the formation of the world that can be used for human benefit.



Reverse osmosis

A method of purifying water by forcing it under pressure through a membrane which has tiny holes in it. The molecules of water pass through the holes but most ions and molecules of dissolved substances do not pass through.



Life-cycle assessment (LCA)

A 'cradle-to-grave' analysis of the impact of a manufactured product on the environment. Also known as a life-cycle analysis.

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Properties

The characteristics of something. In chemistry, chemical properties include the reactions a substance can take part in. Physical properties include colour and boiling point.



Malleable

Capable of being hammered or pressed into a new shape without being likely to break or return to the original shape.



Unreactive

A substance is unreactive or inert if it does not easily take part in chemical reactions.

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Polymer

A large molecule formed from many identical smaller molecules known as monomers.



Composite material

Material made from two or more different materials with contrasting properties.



Matrix

The substance that binds the reinforcement together in a composite material.

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