Alcohol: The family name of a group of organic chemical compounds composed of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen. The series of molecules vary in chain length and are composed of a hydrocarbon plus a hydroxyl group; CH(3)-(CH(2))n-OH (e.g., methanol, ethanol, and tertiary butyl alcohol). See Fuel ethanol.

Alternative-fuel: Alternative fuels, for transportation applications, include the following: methanol; denatured ethanol, and other alcohols; fuel mixtures containing 85 percent or more by volume of methanol, denatured ethanol, and other alcohols with motor gasoline or other fuels; natural gas; liquefied petroleum gas (propane); hydrogen; coal-derived liquid fuels; fuels (other than alcohol) derived from biological materials (biofuels such as soy diesel fuel); electricity (including electricity from solar energy); and "... any other fuel the Secretary determines, by rule, is substantially not petroleum and would yield substantial energy security benefits and substantial environmental benefits." The term "alternative fuel" does not include alcohol or other blended portions of primarily petroleum-based fuels used as oxygenates or extenders, i.e., MTBE, ETBE, other ethers, and the 10-percent ethanol portion of gasohol.

Alternative-fuel vehicle (AFV): A vehicle designed to operate on an alternative fuel (e.g., compressed natural gas, methanol blend, or electricity). The vehicle could be either a dedicated vehicle designed to operate exclusively on alternative fuel or a nondedicated vehicle designed to operate on alternative fuel and/or a traditional fuel.

Anthracite: The highest rank of coal; used primarily for residential and commercial space heating. It is a hard, brittle, and black lustrous coal, often referred to as hard coal, containing a high percentage of fixed carbon and a low percentage of volatile matter. The moisture content of fresh-mined anthracite generally is less than 15 percent. The heat content of anthracite ranges from 22 to 28 million Btu per short ton on a moist, mineral-matter-free basis. The heat content of anthracite coal consumed in the United States averages 25 million Btu per short ton, on the as-received basis (i.e., containing both inherent moisture and mineral matter). Note: Since the 1980s, anthracite refuse or mine waste has been used for steam-electric power generation. This fuel typically has a heat content of 15 million Btu per ton or less.

Anthropogenic: Made or generated by a human or caused by human activity. The term is used in the context of global climate change to refer to gaseous emissions that are the result of human activities, as well as other potentially climate-altering activities, such as deforestation.

Asphalt: A dark brown-to-black cement-like material obtained by petroleum processing and containing bitumens as the predominant component; used primarily for road construction. It includes crude asphalt as well as the following finished products: cements, fluxes, the asphalt content of emulsions (exclusive of water), and petroleum distillates blended with asphalt to make cutback asphalts. Note: The conversion factor for asphalt is 5.5 barrels per short ton.


Aviation gasoline blending components: Naphthas that will be used for blending or compounding into finished aviation gasoline (e.g., straight run gasoline, alkylate, reformate, benzene, toluene, and xylene). Excludes oxygenates (alcohols, ethers), butane, and natural gasoline. Oxygenates are reported as other hydrocarbons, hydrogen, and oxygenates. See Aviation gasoline, finished.

Aviation gasoline, finished: A complex mixture of relatively volatile hydrocarbons with or without small quantities of additives, blended to form a fuel suitable for use in aviation reciprocating engines. Fuel specifications are provided in ASTM Specification D 910 and Military Specification MIL-G-5572. Note: Data on blending components are not counted in data on finished aviation gasoline.

Barrel (petroleum): A unit of volume equal to 42 U.S. Gallons.

Base gas: The quantity of natural gas needed to maintain adequate reservoir pressures and deliverability rates throughout the withdrawal season. Base gas usually is not withdrawn and remains in the reservoir. All natural gas native to a depleted reservoir is included in the base gas volume.

Biodiesel: A fuel typically made from soybean, canola, or other vegetable oils; animal fats; and recycled grease. It can serve as a substitute for petroleum-derived diesel fuel or distillate fuel oil. For U.S. Energy Information Administration