

Energy LITERACY Project

Linking Energy, the Economy and the Environment

The current energy situation in the United States has amplified the need for a sustainable natural energy policy. Without one, the industry will continue to face a constantly changing tax, regulatory and business environment, and the public will pay for this uncertainty premium.

Abundant Energy – A Constitutional Right

The American public is accustomed to having abundant energy available at all times. They expect to fuel their vehicles with gasoline, heat their homes with natural gas and have electricity 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Yet, when oil prices rise or an energy company posts a healthy profit, the public outcry can be heard from coast to coast. That is because the American public does not think of energy as a business.

The energy industry is partly responsible for creating society's irrational, emotion-driven attitude toward energy use and accessibility. The industry has done a poor job of educating the public on the relationship between energy, the economy and the American definition of quality of life.

At the same time, the U.S. Government, at all levels, has often presented a politically convenient spin in place of energy realities. Education, not politics, is key to a solid energy policy.

3 Es - Inseparable

The public needs to know that energy is not an isolated entity. The Energy Literacy Project, Inc. (ELP) believes the following elements are inseparable:

- Energy - BTUs from any source, including conservation and efficiency
- Economy - The role energy plays in society's economic well-being
- Environment - The economic choices we make affecting our quality of life

Only then will the public realize the crucial balance among these three elements – the 3 Es – and support a stable energy policy and a stable tax, regulatory and business environment.



Assumed 28th Constitutional Amendment:
The right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness shall be fueled by cheap and abundant energy.

Education Is Key

Now more than ever, people have access to and want information. Between the Department of Energy and the Interstate Oil & Gas Compact Commission, more than 350 sources of reliable, energy-related information have been identified. This is an overwhelming amount, and none of the information fully describes the inseparable nature of the relationship between Energy, the Economy and the Environment.



The ELP is a 501(c)(3) educational and informational corporation with a mission to achieve a cultural change in how society views energy by way of facilitating, consolidating and coordinating educational programs emphasizing the 3 Es. The ELP is developing a variety of resources designed to help people see the complete picture:

www.energy-literacy.org

The ELP's Web site contains detailed information regarding the organization and its programs. It also offers links to current educational and informational materials that accurately reflect the role of one or more of the 3 Es and meet the National Science Education Standards as applied to the K-12 curriculum. These links serve as the menu from which educators can develop a single course that teaches the interlocking nature of energy, the economy and the environment.

K-12 Curriculum

Energy makes an excellent case study in teaching history, economics, earth sciences and other physical and social sciences without focusing intensely on energy or any specific segment of the energy industry. The ELP is building balanced materials from currently available programs for K-12. Recognizing that the messenger is just as important as the message, the ELP is working with various credible organizations to produce and deliver these materials.

Public Outreach

ELP volunteers are available for media interviews and public speaking opportunities. The organization is also represented at various venues that address energy policy and topical energy issues.



Understanding the 3 Es makes cents – and dollars too. It's a pocketbook issue.

Case Study

Where does gasoline come from?



Energy Fuels the Economy

In the mid-1990s, a study by the National Energy Education Development Project revealed that only 43 percent of U.S. teenagers knew that gasoline came from oil. In Texas, the nation's largest oil-producing state, only 38 percent of teenagers knew where natural gas came from.



These statistics astounded Carole Keeton Rylander, then chairman of the Texas Railroad Commission, and prompted her to act. Rylander successfully encouraged Governor George W. Bush to proclaim September as Texas Energy Awareness Month. She then sent a letter to every school district promoting the awareness month and highlighting select energy-related programs, including the Energy Literacy Project.

Within two weeks, the ELP received calls from 21 schools that were interested in the ELP's 3 Es premise of balance. Unfortunately, the ELP was not able to deliver a course of study to these schools because the organization was then in its infancy.

Quality, easy-to-understand course materials relating to the 3 Es premise are in high demand in public school systems throughout the country. The ELP continues to raise funds for the development of these materials. It also is creating alliances with highly regarded, education-focused associations that have the resources and expertise to deliver this unique energy curriculum to teachers and students alike.

A Broad-Based Approach

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The Energy Literacy Project is working with a variety of organizations such as the Colorado School of Mines, Environmental Literacy Council, National Science Teachers Association, the DOE's Energy Information Administration, the Sesame Workshop and National Geographic Society. The ELP creates innovative concepts to present the 3 Es message. It will then match resources from industry, government and others with curriculum designers and other specialists to produce and distribute the product to schools. It's a simple and effective relationship that draws upon each organization's strengths.

Driving Cultural Change – A Long Road

Public perception regarding energy cannot be changed overnight or through one short-term program. It will take time, effort and money to achieve the desired cultural and policy changes. Similar approaches to those noted above will be employed as the ELP takes the 3 Es message beyond the schools to the general public - preschool through the AARP.

The ELP can positively influence public opinion and policy makers, but it needs both philosophical and monetary support from a broad spectrum of concerned organizations. All organizations in every business sector need to view energy education as a core investment that is in their own self-interest and yet essential for long-term growth and profitability of the economy and society as a whole. Working together, the ELP and the organizations that understand the need for a balance among the 3 Es can achieve a publicly supported, sustainable, *i.e.* natural, energy policy and energy supply that benefit everyone.

