

Glossary

NONRENEWABLE ENERGY

E

electric generator a device that converts mechanical energy into electrical energy

F

fossil fuel a nonrenewable energy resource formed from the remains of organisms that lived long ago; examples include oil, coal, and natural gas

N

nuclear energy the energy released by a fission or fusion reaction; the binding energy of the atomic nucleus

nuclear fission the splitting of the nucleus of a large atom into two or more fragments; releases additional neutrons and energy

nuclear fusion the combination of the nuclei of small atoms to form a larger nucleus; releases energy

O

oil reserves oil deposits that are discovered and are in commercial production

P

petroleum a liquid mixture of complex hydrocarbon compounds; used widely as a fuel source