



OIL & NATURAL GAS ENERGY

LIFE CYCLE IMPACTS ON CHILDREN'S HEALTH



Extraction

Oil spills during extraction can contaminate drinking water sources. Some oil or gas drilling practices, such as fracking, also release toxic chemicals into the air, such as benzene, which can increase children's asthma symptoms and cause cancer and birth defects. Oil and gas wells also leak methane, which contribute to climate change.

Processing

After oil is extracted, it is sent to refineries which turn it into a usable fuel such as gasoline or heating oil, or into other products like asphalt, plastics, paints, or even nail polish. Refineries give off smoke that harms children's lungs, and benzene, among other air pollutants. They also release methane.

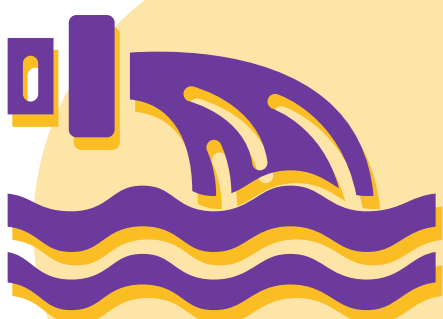


Transport

There are over 1.63 million miles of pipelines that transport natural gas and oil across the U.S. Pipelines leak methane and can rupture, contaminating drinking water with toxic chemicals. Children living near rail- and roadways used for oil transport are exposed to high levels of diesel exhaust, which harms their lungs.

Burning

Oil-burning power plants release air pollutants such as mercury, which harms children's and unborn babies' brains, as well as compounds that create smog pollution which worsens children's asthma. Burning oil and natural gas generates carbon dioxide, which contribute to climate change.



Waste Disposal

Wastewater from drilling and oil sludge waste from oil-burning power plants contain radioactive materials and toxic metals like arsenic and mercury that can contaminate drinking water. Some of these substances can cause cancer, brain damage, and other negative health effects in children and unborn babies.