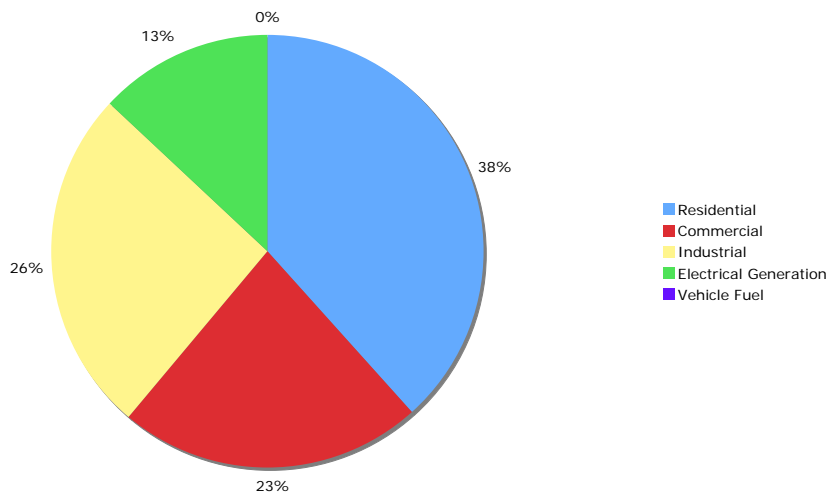


## Natural Gas and Missouri

In 2004 Missouri consumed 268 trillion Btu.<sup>i</sup> of natural gas and the U.S. consumed 22,901 trillion Btu. These accounted for approximately 14% and 23% of total energy consumption, respectively.<sup>ii</sup> Missouri produces no natural gas, and thus must obtain its gas out of state. Here’s how we used our natural gas:<sup>iii</sup>

Missouri Natural Gas Consumption, 2006



In the residential and commercial sectors, space heating is the dominant use, followed by water heating, and cooking. Electrical generation accounted for only 13% of Missouri consumption in 2006, but that is expected to grow. It is the fuel of choice for new power plants because it is cleaner and more efficient.<sup>iv</sup> Natural gas prices, like oil prices, are volatile. As demand for natural gas increases, supply will likely have a hard time keeping up, and prices are likely to rise. Between 1991 and 2005, U.S. gas prices quintupled.<sup>v</sup> Utilities will wrestle with the trade-off between clean, expensive natural gas and dirty, cheap coal.

Most residential and commercial consumers do not have the option of switching away from natural gas. Thus, policy makers may have to wrestle with priorities regarding how hydrocarbon fuels should be allocated. Even for those users who do have the option of switching (some electrical utilities and large industrial plants), oil will be increasingly expensive and unavailable, and coal is devastatingly dirty. Thus, trying to decrease natural gas usage in the industrial sector is likely to involve a very nasty trade-off.

Since space heating and water heating account for the lion’s share of natural gas consumption, conservation and efficiency efforts in those areas appear to be the best options for extending our supply. Fortunately, the EPA’s Energy Star<sup>vi</sup> program and the Green Building Council’s LEED program<sup>vii</sup> already exist to guide such efforts. The policy initiative will involve encouraging use of these programs, not inventing them.

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<sup>i</sup> British Thermal Unit, the amount of heat required to heat 1 lb. of water 1°F.

<sup>ii</sup> *Table S1. Energy consumption estimates by source and end-use sector, 2004*. U.S. Energy Information Administration. [http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/states/\\_seds.html](http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/states/_seds.html). Viewed online 11/6/07.

<sup>iii</sup> Summary statistics for natural gas – Missouri, 2002-2006. U.S. Energy Information Administration. [http://www.eia.doe.gov/oil\\_gas/data\\_publications/natural\\_gas\\_annual/nga.html](http://www.eia.doe.gov/oil_gas/data_publications/natural_gas_annual/nga.html). Viewed online 11/6/07.

<sup>iv</sup> *Missouri fossil fuel use at a glance*. Missouri Department of Natural Resources, <http://www.dnr.mo.gov/energy/eia-fossilfuel.htm>. Viewed online 11/6/07.

<sup>v</sup> *BP Statistical review of world energy, 2007*. <http://www.bp.com/statisticalreview>.

<sup>vi</sup> See [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).

<sup>vii</sup> See <http://www.usgbc.org/LEED>.