Nuclear Power Essay, Research Paper

People use a lot of natural resources on the earth. These resources are gradually being diminished. As these resources are diminished we will continue to look for alternative energy sources. Currently the only short term solution to this problem is nuclear power. The problem with that though is that nuclear power is not as safe as burning coal, gas, or oil. In fact nuclear power is much more dangerous than those other sources of energy. Yet today many people use nuclear power in their every day life. It s used to produce electricity in our homes, schools, and businesses. It s aloe used for lighting, heating and cooking.

The way people sue energy by wasting electricity and the resources that are used to produce it (coal, gas, oil) we will be forced to build more and more nuclear power plants to produce energy. But one question is, is it necessary to build power plants? There are many other environmentally safe ways that could be used to produce energy. These methods include: solar power, wind power, and hydroelectric power.

With power plants come many, many risks but with a nuclear power plants there are many more risks involved. Some risks taken are Meltdowns, cancer, radiation, mutations and deaths. With radiation there are many short-term and long-term effects such as: 1) radiation disrupts the process that takes place in the nuclei of living organisms cells, decreasing the resistance of disease and increasing risks of developing cancer 2) Abnormalities such as mongolism can be passed to offspring. Also the damage done to our environment is irreparable. Cancer also can be caused from nuclear power plants. The cases of cancer deaths have gone up in areas were there are nuclear power plants.

Not everything about nuclear power is in fact a bad thing. With the use of nuclear power it would reduce the air born pollutants from coal burning factories. So with the use of nuclear energy we can save air, and resources for our children.

Accidents within nuclear power plants are very rare in the United States. This does not mean that they do not occur. One accident occurred in the early 1980’s. There was a fire at Yankee Atomic, a nuclear power plant in Massachusetts. The fire destroyed over 3 million dollars worth of electrical wiring in the reactor. Some workmen, who were using matches to find a leak in the ventilation system of the reactor, caused the fire. The damage to the reactor was not serious but it was shut down for two weeks for repairs. If the situation was not brought under control the fire could have spread and caused a meltdown or serious leak with would have created many more problems.

The most serious nuclear accident in the United States occurred at Three Mile Island, Pennsylvania in 1979. A coolant pipe was accidentally blocked due to cleaning and repairs the blockage allowed no water to reach the reactor core to cool it down and the core ruptured and leaked radioactive particles into the atmosphere. The core itself came close to meltdown. If the core had melted down much of Pennsylvania, the radioactive fallout would have contaminated New York and New Jersey. Today s nuclear power plants are relatively safe but the problem of accidents increases with every new plant that is built.