I’d put my money on the Sun and Solar Energy, what a source of Power! I hope we don’t have to wait until oil and coal run out, before we tackle that.

Thomas Edison
Energy in Everyday Life

Sources Of Radioactivity

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Radioactive decay is used in energy generation, medicine, manufacturing, agriculture, environmental, engineering, science, as well as safety in our homes.

Radiation energy is an integral part of daily life. Let’s look at the pieces that impact us everyday.
Cosmic: The sun and stars send a constant stream of cosmic radiation to earth, like a steady drizzle of rain.

Differences in elevation, atmospheric conditions, and the earth’s magnetic field can change the amount (or dose) of cosmic radiation that we receive. Frequent fliers ...
Terrestrial: The earth itself is a source of terrestrial radiation.

Radioactive nuclei (including uranium, thorium, and radium) exist in soil, water and rock. Our buildings, made from the earth, are the largest dose in this category for most people.
Atmospheric: All air contains radon, which accounts for most of the dose that people receive each year.


All organic matter (plants and animals) contains radioactive carbon-14 and potassium-40. Bananas are rich in potassium.
Medical procedures such as diagnostic x-rays, nuclear medicine, and radiation therapy is by far the largest source of man-made radiation exposure.

In 1986, Chernobyl operators made key mistakes as the reactor was powering down for routine maintenance.
They disabled the emergency cooling system (a blatant violation of safety regulations), withdrew the control rods, and powered off the cooling pumps.

The reactor melted down which caused a steam explosion that ripped open the reactor vessel. This exposed the core which led to major radioactive release.