

Energy Consumption by Sector

Note. Electrical System Energy Losses. Electrical system energy losses are calculated as the difference between total primary consumption by the electric power sector—see Table 2.1f—and the total energy content of electricity retail sales—see Tables 8.9 and A6. Most of these losses occur at steam-electric power plants (conventional and nuclear) in the conversion of heat energy into mechanical energy to turn electric generators. The loss is a thermodynamically necessary feature of the steam-electric cycle. Part of the energy input-to-output

losses is a result of imputing fossil energy equivalent inputs for hydroelectric, solar, and wind energy sources, since there is no generally accepted practice for measuring those thermal conversion rates. In addition to conversion losses, other losses include power plant use of electricity, transmission and distribution of electricity from power plants to end-use consumers (also called "line losses"), and unaccounted for electricity. Total losses are allocated to the end-use sectors in proportion to each sector's share of total electricity sales. Overall, about two thirds of total energy input is lost in conversion. Currently, of electricity generated, approximately 5 percent is lost in plant use and 7 percent is lost in transmission and distribution.