

Wind Turbines and Solar Panels ONLY Generate Electricity



Co-authored by Ronald Stein and Yoshihiro Muronaka

August 22, 2025

Wind turbines and solar panels are incapable of making any of the products or transportation fuels demanded by the 8 billion on this planet.

It is both timely and impactful to deepen public and governmental policymakers' understanding of electricity, including the essential role of fossil fuels that are driving global development with the products and transportation fuels that are dependent on those same fossil fuels.

In less than a few centuries, 250 groundbreaking hydrocarbon processing and refining techniques were discovered. Their impact continues today, benefiting the 8 billion people living on Earth.

Today, over 6,000 products derived from petroleum enrich our lives. They have reduced infant mortality, doubled global life expectancy from around 40 to over 80 years, and made it possible to travel anywhere in the world by plane, train, ship, or car—drastically reducing weather-related deaths to nearly zero. These were all unimaginable in societies before 1800.

If we go back 200 years to the 1800s, we find a decarbonized society, i.e., a very different era and a society without products, transportation fuels, and electricity, it was: fossil-fuel products weren't widespread, thus lifestyles were less prosperous, health conditions were precarious, and life longevity was short.

A renewed shift toward decarbonization and zero-emission lifestyles, severely restricts the use of fossil fuels, like coal and oil, could bring us back to a world of more than 200 years ago. That might mean billions suffering again from disease, malnutrition, and weather-related fatalities.

Moving toward decarbonization risks depriving, or delaying access to, the standards of living and products that wealthy, healthy nations take for granted. Today, around 700 million people, which is roughly 9% of humanity, live below the international poverty line. In other words, halting fossil fuel production and use would reverse many centuries of progress.

Over the last 200 years, after the discovery of the products and transportation fuels that could be manufactured out of crude oil, the world populated from 1 to 8 billion. It was the more than 6,000 "products" from oil that supported the tremendous growth in population.

Today, we have more than 1.4 billion cars and trucks, 50,000 merchant ships, 20,000 commercial aircraft, and 50,000 military aircraft that use the fuels manufactured from crude oil. The fuels to move the heavy-weight and long-range needs of jets moving people and products, and the merchant ships for global trade flows, and the military and space programs, are also dependent on what can be manufactured from crude oil.

Today, we're a materialistic society. Wind and solar cannot make EV's, or any of the products or fuels that get made from fossil fuels.

- Wind turbines and solar panels can ONLY generate ELECTRICITY.
- All the products and transportation fuels demanded by society, all the infrastructures, and the economy are made from fossil fuels.

Today, “Net Zero” policymakers setting “green” policies are oblivious to the reality that so-called “renewables”, ONLY generate electricity but CANNOT make anything. In addition, everything that NEEDS Electricity, like iPhones and computers, are made with petrochemicals manufactured from crude oil, coal, or natural gas.

- Electricity came AFTER oil, as ALL electrical generation methods from hydro, coal, natural gas, nuclear, wind, and solar are ALL built with the products, components, and equipment that are made from oil derivatives manufactured from crude oil.
- All the transportation fuels for the more than 1,400,000,000 cars and trucks in the world, the 50,000 merchant ships, the 20,000 commercial aircraft, and the 50,000 military aircraft are made from raw crude oil.
- All 60 million EV’s currently in the world today are also built with the products, components, and equipment that are made from the oil derivatives manufactured from crude oil.
- Getting rid of crude oil would eliminate electricity, and the more than 6,000 products in demand by hospitals, airports, communications, and the 8 billion on this planet, and would paralyze virtually all transportation by cars, trucks, EVs, ships, and aircraft!

We’ve had more than 200 years to “clone” the SUPPLY of oil production and oil refining to support the supply chain of products and transportation fuels DEMANDED by society and have been unsuccessful. The greatest threat to humanity is running out of crude oil before we have an alternative that can meet the supply chain of all the products and transportation fuels that are derived from oil.

Just remember that wind turbines and solar panels are incapable of making any of the products or transportation fuels demanded by the 8 billion on this planet. Thus, it is essential to have balanced discussions about products, electricity, and transportation fuels to enhance the understanding of energy systems with public and governmental policymakers through tangible examples and to develop materials that bridge both the macro and technical viewpoints.

Please share this information with teachers, students, and friends to encourage Energy Literacy conversations at the family dinner table.

[Click this Link to Sign up for Energy Literacy from Ronald Stein](#)

[BIO: Yoshihiro Muronaka, P.E.Jp is a chemical engineer who currently focuses on evaluating net-zero and decarbonization policies, advocating alternative energy concepts such as “carbon symbiosis,” and promoting balanced international energy cooperation.]

© 2025 Ronald Stein, PE – All Rights Reserved

E-Mail Ronald Stein: Ronald.Stein@EnergyLiteracy.net