Petrochemical Encyclopedia Article

Petrochemical

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Petroleum is probably best known as a source for many important fuels, such as **gasoline**, kerosene, acetylene, and **natural gas**. However, many of the organic compounds that make up the complex mixture known as petroleum have another use. They are raw materials used in the production of a host synthetic products. These **chemicals** are known as petrochemicals. To a large extent, these petrochemicals are **hydrocarbons**. Some of these petrochemicals and the products into which they are made include ethylene (**plastics**, synthetic fibers, and anti-freeze), **benzene** (synthetic **rubber**, latex paints and paper coatings), propylene (drugs and **detergents**), and phenol (adhesives, perfumes, flavorings, and pesticides).

See Also

Fossil Fuels; Synthetic Fuels; Volatile Organic Compound