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CANMET serves Canada's energy research needs

The Canada Centre of Mineral and Energy Technology (CANMET), a branch of the federal ministry of Energy, Mines and Resources, is charged with ensuring the efficient and full use of Canada's natural resources by improving mineral and energy resource technology.

CANMET employs some 700 scientists, engineers, technicians and support staff, making it Canada's largest research organization serving the energy and mineral sectors.

Research is carried out in four groups of laboratories — energy research, mining research, mineral sciences and physical metallurgy research.

From its beginning, with the appointment of its first director in 1901, the centre has been entrusted to provide a technical knowledge base to aid the federal government in formulating policies and in advising regulatory agencies.

But after seven decades of existence, the scope of CANMET's scientific activities has greatly expanded.

The principal aim, however, is still to help the industry make an even greater

contribution to the national economy, says Dr. W.G. Jeffery, director-general of CANMET.

"Coal and petroleum problems have, from the start, been the subject of our investigation," he said. "But now energy research has been given added emphasis.

"The spectre of impending shortages of oil has spurred efforts to improve recovery and utilization of domestic supplies, to develop new and innovative sources, and to substitute alternative sources of energy," said Dr. Jeffery.

Natural gas automobile fuel

Researchers at the Canadian Combustion Research Laboratory, part of CANMET's research and development facilities, are currently looking at natural gas as a possible automobile fuel and at types of domestic heating technologies.

A.C.S. (Skip) Hayden, a research scientist, who heads conservation and renewable energy research and development, said that he believes that natural gas is "quite a viable automobile fuel" and that a couple of utilities have been approached



A CANMET employee works on oil furnace at the centre's combustion laboratory.



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