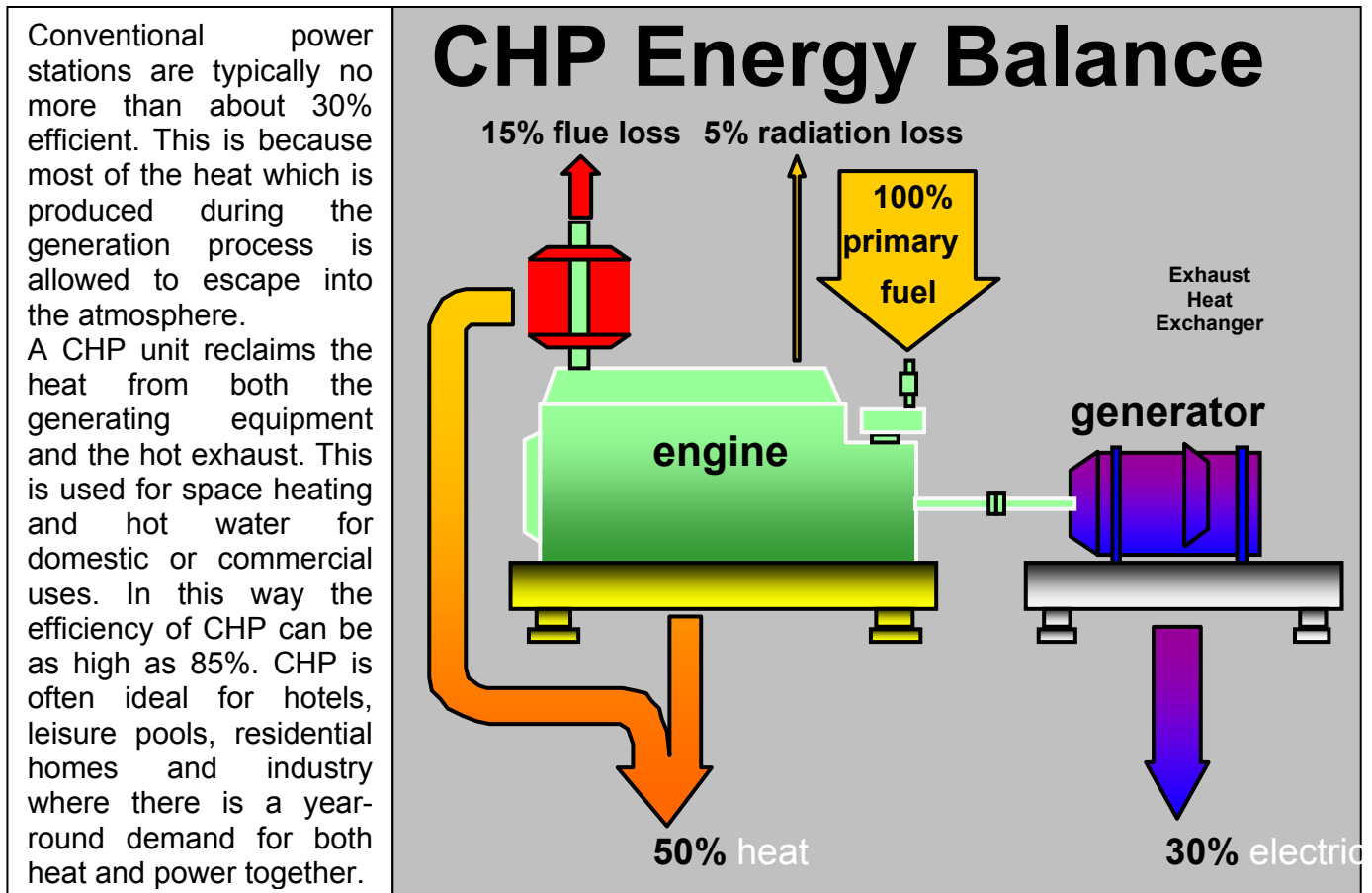


Combined Heat & Power

A CHP plant consists of an engine which is used for generating electricity. It usually runs on diesel oil or natural gas or it might use waste products for fuel. But CHP is a very efficient method for producing electricity and heat together from a single source.



Leicester City Council installed two units at swimming pools. One was bought outright by the Council with the other operating under a discount-electricity-purchase (DEP) arrangement with a contractor. This means that the contractor owns and maintains the unit, selling the electricity it produces to the user at a special rate below that charged by the regional electricity company. The user pays for all the gas it uses but the heat it provides effectively then comes "free."

If all the electricity produced by a CHP unit cannot be used directly on site it can either be sold to a regional electricity company, or to other nominated sites. This is what happens in Leicester. There are CHP units at four of the Council's District Heating sites, which provide affordable space heating and hot water centrally to large residential estates. However, most of the electricity generated there is sent via the East Midlands Electricity system to 17 other Council buildings such as museums, leisure centres and municipal offices. The sale of electricity in this way provides useful income for the Housing Department.