

Refinery Glossary

Below is a list of terms relating to the crude oil refinery process.

Asphaltene

Asphalt-like product residual from the vacuum tower.

Charge stock

A fluid that begins a refinery operation. It can be crude oil, residual, distillate or any number of other petroleum products.

Coke

Cooked-asphalt or vacuum tower bottom. Coke is used in steel and aluminum foundries.

Coker

A reactor used specifically for making coke.

Cracking

A general term describing a refinery process in which heavy petroleum fractions are converted into lighter, more valuable fractions. The process is characterized by high temperatures (700+ degrees Fahrenheit) and can involve the use of a catalyst to increase the light-ends yield.

Deasphalted oil

Residuum oil that has undergone a special extraction process.

Distillate

A general term denoting that portions of a crude oil have been vaporized and condensed (distilled).

Feed stock

Alternate term for charge stock.

Gas oil

A light distillate often used to flush asphalt or vacuum tower bottom systems.

Light ends

Less viscous products. These include more valuable and sought-after refinery products, such as distillates, gasoline, #2 F.O. and gas oil.

Process stream

The flow of fluid to and from the refinery process.

Residuum (residual)

Heavier ends of crude oil that remain (residue) after the refining process. Generally characterized by high viscosity.

Vacuum tower bottom

Alternate term for asphaltene.

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