2023 Ch H1 Q12

Section: Chemistry in Society

Topic: Chemical Energy

Question Summary

Which of the following equations represents an enthalpy of combustion?

A: $2CH_4(g) + 3O_2(g) \rightarrow 2CO(g) + 4H_2O(\ell)$

B: $CH_4(g) + 1\frac{1}{2}O_2(g) \rightarrow CO(g) + 2H_2O(\ell)$

C: $2C_2H_6(g) + 7O_2(g) \rightarrow 4CO_2(g) + 6H_2O(\ell)$

D: $C_2H_6(g) + 3\frac{1}{2}O_2(g) \rightarrow 2CO_2(g) + 3H_2O(\ell)$

Worked Solution

The enthalpy of combustion is defined as the energy released when 1 mole of a substance burns completely in oxygen to produce carbon dioxide and water.

- Option A produces carbon monoxide, so incomplete combustion.
- Option B also produces carbon monoxide, so incomplete combustion.
- Option C shows 2 moles of ethane burning, but the enthalpy of combustion must be written for 1 mole.

• Option D shows 1 mole of ethane burning completely to CO₂ and H₂O — correct.

Final Answer

D -
$$C_2H_6(g) + 3\frac{1}{2}O_2(g) \rightarrow 2CO_2(g) + 3H_2O(\ell)$$

Revision Tips

- Combustion must be complete: products are always CO₂ and H₂O.
- Definition uses 1 mole of the fuel.
- Check equations for balancing and correct stoichiometry.