

Title:

Coal Makes a Comeback

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397

Summary:

The United States is returning to coal to generate electricity. Long-dormant mines are being reopened to gather coal, which generates most of the electricity in the country. Why is coal once again such an important resource?

Keywords:

Coal Makes a Comeback

Article Body:

"You load thirteen tons and what do you get?" An abundant, clean, affordable source of power in the United States.

The United States is returning to coal to generate electricity. Long-dormant mines are being reopened to gather coal, which generates most of the electricity in the country. Why is coal once again such an important resource?

* Abundance of supply and demand. Currently, 51 percent of the electricity in the United States is generated by coal power and demand for coal is increasing. In the next 25 years, demand for electricity is expected to increase more than 50 percent. Meeting this demand will require that an average of 65 new power plants be built each year.

Fortunately, the United States contains 274 billion tons of coal that can be used to produce energy for homes and businesses. The coal in the United States could last for 250 years, much longer than either oil or natural gas, and has been proven a recoverable reserve.

* A clean energy source. Coal as a clean energy source? How can that be? Between 1976 and 1993, 38 coal technology projects known as Clean Coal Technology, were conducted. One such technology is a NOX (nitrogen oxide) burner, which is currently used or being installed in three-fourths of power plants that use coal. The result of these

technologies was a decrease in emissions from coal-generated electricity. Between 1980 and 2001, emissions of sulfur dioxide decreased 38 percent.

Nitrogen oxide emissions decreased 32 percent and emissions from particulate matter (PM-10), a mixture of solid and liquid particles found in the air, dropped 25 percent.

* **Affordability.** The cost of electricity allows businesses to remain competitive. Businesses spend less on transportation and generation costs with coal than with natural gas or oil. Coal never needs to be shipped across the whole country because mines are located throughout the United States. Furthermore, the cost of coal-generated electricity is approximately one-fourth that of electricity generated by gas, partly because the cost of coal is more stable than natural gas. As a result, more businesses are turning to coal as a source of power.

Quest Minerals and Mining (OTC BB: QMMG.OB) has acquired and re-opened mines in the southeastern United States that were closed due to a downturn in the price of coal. The company's focus is on properties that produce quality compliance coal. In addition to selling coal to utilities and industries, Quest is seeking metallurgical coal to be used in steel production.