

News
From _____

CONGRESSMAN

Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA STEAM COAL HOLDING ITS OWN DESPITE SOFT MARKET

Washington, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) announced today that despite generally soft steam coal market conditions nationwide, domestic electric utility purchases of coal produced by the counties of the Fourth Congressional District rose between 1983 and 1985.

"This is good news for southern West Virginia and especially Logan and Mingo Counties, which are responsible for the majority of the steam coal produced in the Fourth District," Rahall observed. "It proves that our low-sulfur coal is still the fuel of choice for many domestic electric utility companies."

Citing a statistical analysis of coal purchases by domestic electric utility companies compiled by his office, Rahall pointed out, "In 1985, the Fourth District was responsible for 11,379,100 tons of steam coal purchased by the nation's electric utilities, an increase over the 1983 amount of 11,273,800 tons. The majority of this production came from Logan and Mingo counties, with smaller tonnages from Wyoming, McDowell, Raleigh, Wayne, and Mercer counties, which traditionally gear their production toward the steel industry."

According to Rahall's analysis, 25 electric utility companies in 15 states purchased this coal representing an increased market share from 1983 levels when 19 utility companies in 12 states purchased coal from the Fourth District. As in 1983, the largest user of steam coal produced in the Fourth District is North Carolina, followed by utilities located in West Virginia. In 1985, Georgia became a major market for this coal, ranking third, closely followed by Ohio.

The single largest utility purchaser of Logan and Mingo county coal in 1985 was Appalachian Power's Amos plant, followed by Carolina Power and Light's Mayo plant, and Georgia Power's Scherer plant.

"I am very encouraged that our steam coal in West Virginia seems to be holding its own in spite of the nation's downward trend," Rahall observed. "I hope that more and more domestic utilities will take heed of the outstanding steam coal produced throughout the Fourth District. I will continue to channel my efforts toward making West Virginia coal even more attractive to domestic users, particularly in the area of transportation costs."

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