COAL MINING WORKFORCE

Indiana's coal mining industry has come a long way from the pick and shovel of the 19th century. Modern technology has brought large-scale mechanization to an industry where human hands were once the primary tool of labor. As a result, the modern coal miner is highly-trained and well-paid, holding a job which demands that he or she be among the most skilled workers in all American industry.

In 1998, the Indiana coal mining industry employed a total of 2,807 miners. The average output person per day in 1998 was 45.13 tons.

Productivity and safety are crucial elements of Indiana's coal mining industry. In the past 6 years average productivity of coal mines in the U.S. has increased by more than 40 percent.

Consistent with an industry that has itself seen great technological change in recent years, the coal workforce has undergone significant realignment in the last decade, generally becoming smaller, more experienced, productive and technologically sophisticated.

As operations and equipment have become more mechanized and computerized, the job of mining and the type of person required to extract coal have also changed dramatically.

At the same time, the mine as a workplace as also undergone major changes. Safety and health regulations and conscientious effort by coal producers and miners have helped to greatly reduce the occupational dangers traditionally associated with mining coal.

U.S. Coal Mining Productivity Trends Since 1950

(Average Tons per Miner per Hour)

YEAR	UNDERGROUND	SURFACE	ALL MINES*
1950	0.72	1.96	0.76
1955	1.04	2.65	1.14
1960	1.33	2.91	1.52
1965	1.75	4.10	2.09
1970	1.72	4.53	2.30
1975	1.19	3.26	1.81
1980	1.21	3.27	1.93
1985	1.79	4.24	2.74
1990	2.54	5.94	3.83
1991	2.69	6.38	4.09
1992	2.93	6.59	4.36
1993	2.95	7.23	4.70
1994	3.19	7.67	4.98
1995	3.39	8.48	5.38
1996	3.57	9.05	5.69
1997	3.83	9.86	6.04
1998	3.84	9.85	6.22
1999	3.99	10.39	6.61
2000	4.15	11.01	6.99
2001	4.02	10.61	6.83
2002	n/a	n/a	n/a

Note (*) included anthracite mine(s) Source: Energy Information Administration

The demographics of the modern coal work force are far different than the often unflattering stereotypes that exist in the public psyche. Contrary to the popular perception, more than three-fourths of all coal miners have a high school or better education. They earn an average of $19.01 per hour, or more than $45,000 annually (based on an average of 44.4 hours), with considerably more possible through overtime and production bonuses. Coal workers are paid more than their counterparts in the steel, auto and chemical industries, when measured in terms of average dollars per hour. In addition, most are covered by extensive health insurance and pension benefits, whether they are union or non-union miners.

In addition, EIA data reveal that union production represented about 39 percent of the total U.S. coal mined in 1998. Of total union production, UMWA mines accounted for about 86 percent. Union production remains strongest in the underground portion of the industry, accounting for 43 percent of production; in the surface mining sector; it represents only 33 percent of the total.

Union, Non-Union Composition of the U.S. Coal Workforce - 2000

MINE TYPE	UMWA	OTHER UNIONS	UNION TOTAL	NON UNION	TOTAL
Underground	16,167	429	16,596	25,756	42,352
Surface	4,355	4,397	8,712	20,458	29,170
U.S. Total	20,522	4,786	25,308	46,214	71,522

Source: Energy Information Administration