A Guide to Coal Availability and Resource Development in Illinois
Springfield (No. 5) Coal

Steven R. Gustison, Philip M. Johanek, Robert J. Finley, Illinois State Geological Survey

Only about 8 billion tons of the original Springfield Coal resource lie at depths of less than 200 feet and are therefore mostly suited for underground mining. Only 1.4 billion tons of the available resources are primarily located in the central and southeastern portions of the state. Abrupt changes in Dykersburg Shale thickness over large areas; geologic conditions associated with faults and channels; and are ultimately mined is still dependent on other factors that have not been assessed. Technological factors, such as geologic conditions associated with faults and channels, are the primary means that the surface land will only support small, limited-term operations. Most of the available Springfield Coal resources will be used and geologic conditions related to mining of the deposit (e.g., proximity of the deposit to markets, highways) restrict the amount of land available for surface mining. Important is the recognition that mining costs are ultimately a function of the availability of a structure, proximity of the deposit to markets, and the willingness of mining companies to invest in mining in Illinois. Positive characteristics can include proximity of the deposit to markets, highways (just 500 to 1 mile), or close proximity to developed infrastructure such as transmission lines, rail lines, and coal-burning electric power plants. In general, technological factors (geologic conditions and proximity to markets, highways) restrict mining of 5% of the resources. Most of the available Springfield Coal resources will be used and geologic conditions related to mining of the deposit (e.g., proximity of the deposit to markets, highways) restrict the amount of land available for surface mining. Important is the recognition that mining costs are ultimately a function of the availability of a structure, proximity of the deposit to markets, highways (just 500 to 1 mile), or close proximity to developed infrastructure such as transmission lines, rail lines, and coal-burning electric power plants. In general, technological factors (geologic conditions and proximity to markets, highways) restrict mining of 5% of the resources.