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## 1. EIA Coal Reserves Data

This report is the fourth in a series published by the Energy Information Administration (EIA) to provide data on coal resources and reserves (see "Important Terminology" box) allocated by estimated ranges of heat and sulfur content. EIA's estimated recoverable reserves are derived from the demonstrated reserve base (DRB) of coal in the United States (see DRB discussion in next section) by applying adjustments for the percentages of the DRB expected to be accessible, and then for the percentages of the accessible DRB expected to be recoverable by surface and underground mining. The usual understanding of the term "reserves" as referring to quantities that can be recovered at a sustainable profit cannot technically be extended to EIA's estimated recoverable reserves because economic and engineering data to project mining and development costs and coal resource market values are not available. EIA's recoverable reserves at active mines, about which EIA is authorized to collect simple tonnage and recovery rate estimates in its annual *Coal Production Report* survey, rely on mine operator estimates, and cannot be classified as to geologic assurance (see "Measured Resources" in "Important Terminology" box).

### Important Terminology: Resources, Reserves, and the DRB<sup>a</sup>

"Resources are naturally occurring concentrations or deposits of coal in the Earth's crust, in such forms and amounts that economic extraction is currently or potentially feasible.

"Measured resources" refers to coal for which estimates of the rank and quantity have been computed to a high degree of geologic assurance, from sample analyses and measurements from closely spaced and geologically well known sample sites. Under the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) criteria, the points of observation are no greater than 1/2 mile apart (see Figure A1). Measured coal is projected to extend as a 1/4-mile-wide belt from the outcrop or points of observation or measurement.

"Indicated resources" refers to coal for which estimates of the rank, quality, and quantity have been computed to a moderate degree of geologic assurance, partly from sample analyses and measurements and partly from reasonable geologic projections. Under the USGS criteria, the points of observation are from 1/2 to 1 1/2- miles apart (see Figure A1). Indicated coal is projected to extend as a 1/2-mile-wide belt that lies more than 1/4 mile from the outcrop or points of observation or measurement.

"Demonstrated resources" are the sum of measured resources and indicated resources.