

2005 Changes in Coal Distribution Table Format and Data Sources

Starting with the 2005 Coal Distribution tables, EIA has a new format that affects the way the use of coal synfuel is reported. For data years 2001 through 2004, EIA reported distributions of coal to synfuel plants as part of industrial coal use. Many of our data users requested that EIA not aggregate coal received at coal synfuel plants with other industrial coal because it distorted the actual use of coal by the industrial sector. Consequently, in the 2005 Coal Distribution tables coal synfuel is treated as just another type of coal and it is reported according to its end-use sector. The data reported for industrial and coke plants in the 2005 distribution tables are the sums of all distributions to those sectors (both coal and coal synfuel). For the electricity generating sector, EIA reports a single national total of coal synfuel distributed to the electric power sector, due to data limitations.

The industrial plant total (2005 Coal Distribution tables) is 59,673,000 short tons, which includes 3,431,000 short tons of coal synfuel received by manufacturing plants. The coke plant total of 22,846,000 short tons includes 3,102,000 short tons of coal synfuel received by coke plants. The remaining domestic distribution of coal synfuel for 2005 was to electric power plants in the amount of 128,615,000 short tons (not included in the state-level totals). Exports of coal synfuel, which totaled 5,122,000 short tons in 2005, are shown at the bottom of the Domestic and Foreign Distribution table. Overall, including foreign sales, 140,271,000 short tons of coal synfuel were received by final consumers in 2005. This nearly matches the 2005 quantity (140,598,000 short tons) of coal receipts at coal synfuel plants reported by EIA in table 3 of the Quarterly Coal Report. (Note: the source of coal synfuel distribution data is table 38 in the Quarterly Coal Report: <http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/FTP/ROOT/coal/qcr/0121054q.pdf>)

Starting with the 2005 Coal Distribution tables (origin to destination and destination to origin), EIA has obtained some data from different sources. Coal distributed to manufacturing plants is no longer taken from the EIA-6A survey, rather the data for manufacturing plants are receipts as reported on the EIA-3 data survey of manufacturing plants. EIA instructed respondents to the 2005 EIA-6A survey to report coal distributed to coal synfuel plants under its own distinct consumer sector. Checking by EIA revealed that EIA-6A respondents were not able to separate distributions into the two distinct consumer sectors (manufacturing versus synfuel plants). On the EIA-3 survey, in comparison, EIA has identified the plants which are coal synfuel plants, allowing EIA to keep the data for the manufacturing sector separate. Overall, EIA has made the determination that the EIA-3 receipt data are a better representation of coal distributed to the manufacturing sector than the EIA-6A data. Accordingly, EIA is reporting the EIA-3 data in place of the EIA-6A “manufacturing” data. Also, for the first time, EIA is using receipts at coke plants from the EIA-5 survey in place of the EIA-6A data for coal distributed to coke plants. EIA has made the determination that the EIA-5 data are more accurate than the comparable EIA-6A data.