

Strengthening America's Infrastructure

METALLURGICAL COAL

Metallurgical coal, also known as coking coal, is used to produce coke, an integral component used in steelmaking. Steel is essential for building the critical infrastructure and the products that make our quality of life possible.

Metallurgical coal is a high-grade component in the chemical reactions that transform iron into steel.

The steel industry uses coal coke to smelt iron ore into iron to make steel. The high temperatures created by burning coal coke give steel its strength and flexibility. Every ton of steel produced requires approximately 0.6 tons of metallurgical coal.¹

Nearly every industry including energy, construction, transportation and equipment manufacturing requires steel,

which is necessary for building infrastructure such as railways, bridges, tunnels, skyscrapers, wind turbines, and power plants. By 2050, steel use is projected to be 1.5 times higher than present levels in order to meet the needs of our growing population.

Around 1 billion tons of metallurgical coal are used in global steel production a year, which accounts for 15 percent of total coal consumption worldwide.

Global steel demand continues to surge to record highs and is expected to increase 20 percent by 2030. The U.S. has more than 175 metallurgical coal mines, directly employing more than 13,000 individuals. U.S. coking coal plants consumed 14 million short tons of coal in 2020.

The U.S. was the 2nd largest global exporter of metallurgical coal in 2019, supplying 14 percent of the market. Leading importers of U.S. metallurgical coal in 2019 were Brazil, Japan, Netherlands, India and Ukraine.

While the pandemic negatively impacted global met coal demand in 2020, it is forecast to recover in 2021 as economies recover and global steel demand grows.³



More than 70 percent of the steel produced today uses metallurgical coal, making the world's infrastructure stronger and safer.

While half of the steel used around the world is used for buildings and infrastructure, it is also used for cars (12%), other metal products (10%), mechanical equipment (16%), transportation (5%), appliances (2%) and electrical equipment (3%).²

¹ Steel produced via integrated mills

² World Steel Association

³ IEA Coal 2020 Analysis and Forecast