

0020

*Internal*  
*12/07/004 / JF*

# The Salt Lake Tribune

## West Ridge mine returns to production

IPA will take high ash coal, so West Ridge mine back in action

By Mike Gorrell  
The Salt Lake Tribune

Article Last Updated: 12/06/2007 03:06:19 AM MST

PRICE - After being shut down for two days, production resumed Wednesday at the West Ridge coal mine in Carbon County after the Intermountain Power Agency (IPA) agreed to continue accepting its high ash coal.

That means roughly 160 miners, who were out of work after the mine was temporarily idled over the weekend, are returning to their jobs, said Rob Murray, vice president of business development and external affairs for Murray Energy Corp., whose UtahAmerican Energy Inc. subsidiary runs the mine in the Book Cliffs.

"We are happy that our dedicated, hard-working employees were able to return to work and that there were no layoffs or interruptions in their employment benefits," he added. "It is our desire that our employees have the opportunity to retire at West Ridge."

The announcement was welcomed by

Delynn Fielding, Carbon County's economic development director. "We don't want them closing down, by any means," he said.

UtahAmerican Energy told miners on Sunday that West Ridge was being shut down because its longwall mining machine had encountered unexpectedly high concentrations of ash in the coal it was excavating.

But Murray said Wednesday that IPA, which has a 50 percent ownership in West Ridge and is a major recipient of its coal, agreed to continue buying the mine's coal. It will be blended with higher quality coal for power plant use.

Lance Lee, IPA's coal asset manager, said that while high-ash coal is not that desirable at power plants such as its operation outside of Milford, "we felt it was more important to keep the [West Ridge] miners working."

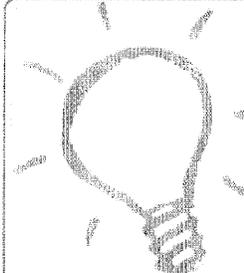
He said ash is not really a concern in terms of pollution emissions, but removing it from coal can increase the cost of producing electricity.

High concentrations also take a toll on the removal equipment.

IPA produces power largely for cities in California.

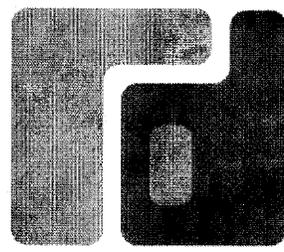
[mikeg@sltrib.com](mailto:mikeg@sltrib.com)

Advertisement



A bright idea in online advertising.

PrinterStitial® ads by Format Dynamics.



FormatDynamics®

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™