

Trends in

U.S. Delivered Coal Costs:

2004-2011

July 2012

By Teresa Foster, William Briggs and Leslie Glustrom

Version 1.1

Inquiries or corrections to info@cleanenergyaction.org

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	5
ALABAMA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	12
ARIZONA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	13
ARKANSAS AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	14
COLORADO AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	15
FLORIDA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	16
GEORGIA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	17
IOWA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	20
KENTUCKY AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	22
LOUISIANA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	23
MARYLAND AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	24
MICHIGAN AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	25
MINNESOTA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	26
MISSISSIPPI AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	27
MISSOURI AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	28
MONTANA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	29
NEBRASKA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	30
NEVADA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011	21

NEW HAMPSHIRE AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201132
NEW JERSEY AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201133
NEW MEXICO AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201134
NEW YORK AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201135
NORTH CAROLINA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201136
NORTH DAKOTA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201137
OHIO AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201138
OKLAHOMA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201139
OREGON AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201140
PENNSYLVANIA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201141
SOUTH CAROLINA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201142
SOUTH DAKOTA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201143
TENNESSEE AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201144
UTAH AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201146
VIRGINIA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201147
WEST VIRGINIA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201148
WISCONSIN AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201149
WYOMING AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-201150
APPENDIX A—COST OF COAL BY STATE 2004-2011

Introduction

Since 2004, U.S. delivered coal costs have begun increasing substantially. The data and graphs in this short report are intended to help increase awareness of these recent increases in the cost of coal.

The data used in this report come from the Energy Information Administration in the U.S. Department of Energy. Delivered coal costs are reported in the EIA's Electric Power Monthly Table 4.10B available from http://www.eia.gov/electricity/monthly/index.cfm. Year-end data for any given year are typically found in the March or April Electric Power Monthly for the following year.

There are some minor inconsistencies in coal costs reported in different years for the same state. For complete accuracy, please refer to the original source data for the state of interest. These inconsistencies are usually a matter of pennies and are not expected to have a significant impact on the trends shown in the graphs in this report.

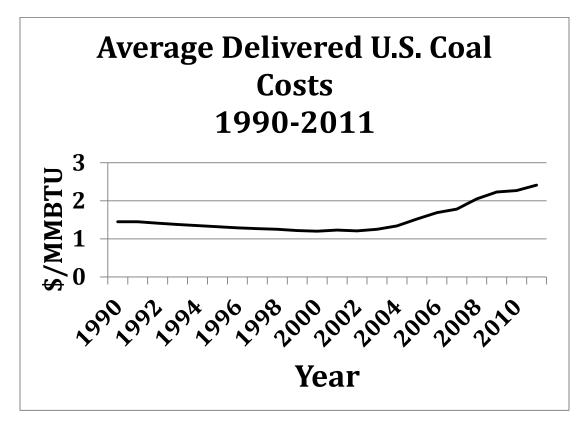
Coal costs can be reported in \$/ton or in \$/MMBTU. Costs reported in \$/MMBTU are usually preferred as they account for differences in the heat content (i.e. BTUs—or British Thermal Units) of the coal.

From Figure 1 on the next page, it can be seen that 2004 was a pivotal year with respect to U.S. coal costs. While the cost/MMBTU was falling during the 1990's due in large part to the increased use of lower cost coal from large western surface mines with lower production costs than the older underground mines of the east, this trend began reversing around 2004 and coal costs started on an upward trend that can be tracked for the state of your choice using the data and graphs in this report.

Coal cost for 2004 and 2011 as well as the percentage increase per year over that period by state can be found in Table 1 on pages 10 and 11. Graphs of coal costs from 2004 to 2011 for each state that uses coal can be found in alphabetical order starting on page 12. Data by state and for each year from 2004 to 2011 can be found in Appendix A starting on page 51.

Figure 1

Data from U.S. Energy Information Administration Electric Power Monthly, Table 4.10B http://www.eia.gov/electricity/monthly/index.cfm



From Figure 1, it can be seen that U.S. coal costs began a steady upward trend in 2004. While the cost of any fossil fuel is the result of complex forces of supply and demand, it appears that the recent rises in the cost of coal are largely due to the following three key factors:

- Increased Production Costs
- Increased Transportation Costs
- Increased Export Pressure

Production costs for mining coal are increasing as coal companies have to move increasing amounts of dirt (and in some cases whole mountain tops) to access the coal. The easily accessible coal has already been mined and burned. Now reaching the remaining coal is becoming increasingly difficult and expensive. These increasing production costs are one factor that is driving U.S. coal costs upward.

Transportation costs for coal are also increasing as the diesel fuel that runs the trains that transport most U.S. coal are rising. These increased transportation costs are a second factor that is driving U.S. coal costs upward.

Export pressure is another factor that can increase coal costs. Countries in Europe, South America and Asia are often willing to pay more for coal as they experience increasingly serious coal supply constraints. Export pressure is a third factor that is driving U.S. coal costs upward.

No one can predict how the complex forces of supply and demand will affect future prices of coal, but it appears that production costs, transportation costs and export pressure will tend to drive U.S. coal costs generally upward in the coming years. Citizens and decision-makers are encouraged to begin monitoring coal costs for their state using the publicly available data from the Energy Information Administration.

To track current coal and fuel costs for individual power plants in your state, refer to the Energy Information Administration "923/423" database at http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/electricity/page/eia423.html. You can download the spreadsheet and search it for the power plants in your state.

From data available on recent wind and solar bids in the western United States, it is becoming clear that once coal costs rise above about \$1.50 per MMBTU, it can no longer be assumed that coal is the lowest cost way to generate electricity—even without consideration of the climate change impacts and the other external environmental and health costs of coal. When reviewing cost comparisons for your state, check to see whether your utility is discounting future fuel costs—a practice that can greatly diminish the impact of future fuel costs in any comparison.

Citizens and decision-makers in every state are encouraged to start asking questions about coal costs, the future of the mines that are providing coal to your state and the possibility that your state will be better off investing its energy dollars in fuel-free renewable resources rather than in upgrades to aging coal plants.

For background information on U.S. coal supplies, refer to "Coal: Cheap and Abundant..., Or Is It? Why Americans Should Stop Assuming that the U.S. has a 200 Year Supply of Coal." This report from Clean Energy Action is available at http://cleanenergyaction.files.wordpress.com/2011/10/coal supply constraints ce a 0212091.pdf.

For information on the amount of money many states are spending to import coal into their state, see "Burning Coal, Burning Cash" by the Union of Concerned Scientists available from the link below. Compare the amount of money (often hundreds of millions of dollars or more) spent on coal in your state in 2008 with the increase in the average cost of coal between 2008 and 2011. The amount of money spent on coal will have gone up quite dramatically. This is money that is literally "going up the stack" rather than being invested in clean, fuel-free resources that will help to stabilize future utility bills.

http://www.ucsusa.org/clean energy old/technology and impacts/impacts/burning-coal-burning-cash.html

The environmental and health costs of coal have been written about extensively. The reader is referred to the following for more information.

- The Physicians for Social Responsibility report "Coal's Assault on Human Health" available at http://www.psr.org/assets/pdfs/psr-coal-fullreport.pdf
- The Harvard Study "Full Cost Accounting for the Life Cycle of Coal" available from http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1749-6632.2010.05890.x/full.
- The U.S. Global Change Research Program report "Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States," available from http://downloads.globalchange.gov/usimpacts/pdfs/climate-impacts-report.pdf.

After reviewing the information on the cost of coal as well as the serious environmental and health impacts of coal burning, citizens and decision makers are encouraged to raise the question of whether your state will be best served by spending money on aging coal plants or finding a cleaner, fuel-free path to the future that will begin to stabilize utility bills.

[Data and graphs begin on the next page.]

Table 1

<u>Average Annual Increase in Delivered Coal Cost by State 2004-2011</u>

Data from Table 4.10.B. in the Energy Information Administration's Electric Power Monthly.

Data from Table 4.10.B. in the Energy Information Administration's Electric Power Monthly.

There are some inconsistencies in EPM reported costs. These are not expected to change the conclusions. Please refer to source data.

http://205.254.135.24/electricity/monthly/

State	2004 Coal Cost	2011 Coal Cost	2004-2011	2004-2011
	\$/MMBTU	\$/MMBTU	Average Increase/ Yr	Compound Increase/Yr
Alabama	\$1.51	\$2.87	12.9 %/yr	9.61 %/yr
Arizona	\$1.28	\$1.98	7.8 %/yr	6.43 %/yr
Arkansas	\$1.23	\$1.91	9.8 %/yr	6.49 %/yr
Colorado	\$0.97	\$1.72	11.0 %/yr	8.53 %/yr
Florida	\$1.89	\$3.50	12.2 %/yr	9.20 %/yr
Georgia	\$1.79	\$3.75	15.6 %/yr	11.14 %/yr
Illinois	\$1.16	\$2.01	10.5 %/yr	8.17 %/yr
Indiana	\$1.21	\$2.47	14.9 %/yr	10.73 %/yr
Iowa	\$0.90	\$1.44	8.6 %/yr	6.94 %/yr
Kansas	\$1.03	\$1.75	10.2 %/yr	7.86 %/yr
Kentucky	\$1.39	\$2.34	9.8 %/yr	7.72 %/yr
Louisiana	\$1.37	\$2.65	13.3 %/yr	9.88 %/yr
Maryland	\$1.74	\$3.73	16.3 %/yr	11.51 %/yr
Michigan	\$1.37	\$2.81	14.7 %/yr	10.81 %/yr
Minnesota	\$1.06	\$1.94	11.8 %/yr	9.02%/yr
Mississippi	\$1.73	\$3.95	18.3 %/yr	12.52 %/yr
Missouri	\$0.92	\$1.72	12.4 %/yr	9.35 %/yr
Montana	\$0.63	\$1.61	22.2 %/yr	14.34 %/yr

[Table 1 continued on the next page.]

Table 1--Continued

<u>Average Annual Increase in Delivered Coal Cost by State 2004-2011</u>

Data from Table 4.10.B. in the Energy Information Administration's Electric Power Monthly.

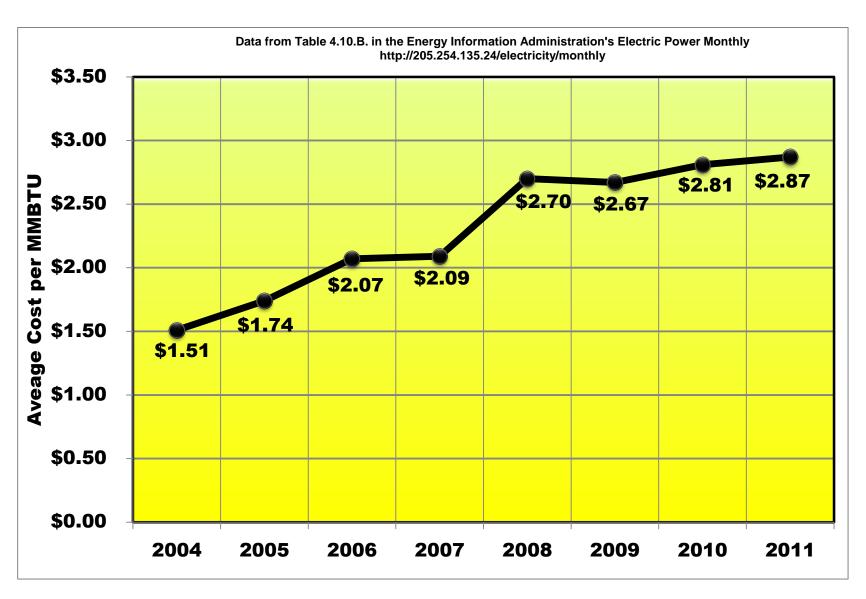
There are some inconsistencies in EPM reported costs. These are not expected to change the conclusions. Please refer to source data.

http://205.254.135.24/electricity/monthly/

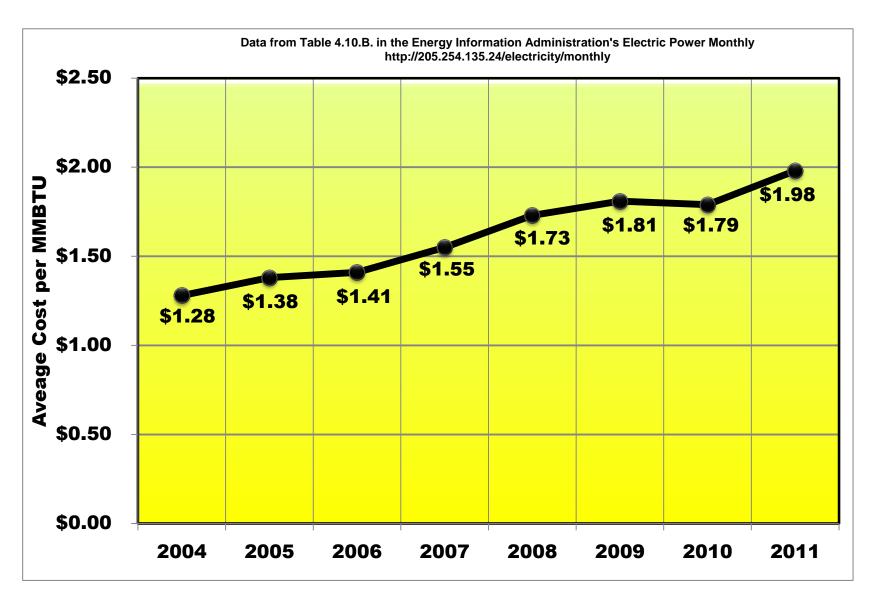
State	2004 Coal Cost	2011 Coal Cost	2004-2011	2004-2011
	\$/MMBTU	\$/MMBTU	Average Increase/ Yr	Compound Increase/Yr
Nebraska	\$0.66	\$1.52	18.6 %/yr	12.66 %/yr
Nevada	\$1.36	\$2.60	13.0 %/yr	9.70 %/yr
New Hampshire	\$2.01	\$3.56	11.0 %/yr	8.51 %/yr
New Jersey	\$2.27	\$4.17	11.9 %/yr	9.08 %/yr
New Mexico	\$1.48	\$2.07	5.7 %/yr	4.91 %/yr
New York	\$1.58	\$4.22	23.8 %/yr	15.07 %/yr
North Carolina	\$2.00	\$3.66	11.8 %/yr	9.02 %/yr
North Dakota	\$0.77	\$1.35	10.8 %/yr	8.35 %/yr
Ohio	\$1.32	\$2.29	10.5 %/yr	8.19 %/yr
Oklahoma	\$1.01	\$1.76	10.6 %/yr	8.26 %/yr
Oregon	\$1.19	\$1.79	7.2 %/yr	6.01 %/yr
Pennsylvania	\$1.23	\$2.66	16.6 %/yr	11.65 %/yr
South Carolina	\$1.91	\$3.85	14.5 %/yr	10.53 %/yr
South Dakota	\$1.38	\$2.07	7.1 %/yr	5.96 %/yr
Tennessee	\$1.33	\$2.82	16.0 %/yr	11.33 %/yr
Texas	\$1.34	\$1.93	6.3 %/yr	5.35 %/yr
Utah	\$1.10	\$1.78	8.0 %/yr	7.12 %/yr
Virginia	\$1.90	\$3.52	12.2 %/yr	9.21 %/yr
West Virginia	\$1.41	\$2.57	11.7 %/yr	8.95 %/yr
Wisconsin	\$1.16	\$2.51	16.6%/yr	11.66 %/yr
Wyoming	\$0.86	\$1.43	9.5 %/yr	7.53 %/yr
U.S. Total	\$1.34	\$2.41	11.4 %/yr	8.75 %/yr

[Graphs of coal cost by state begin on the next page.]

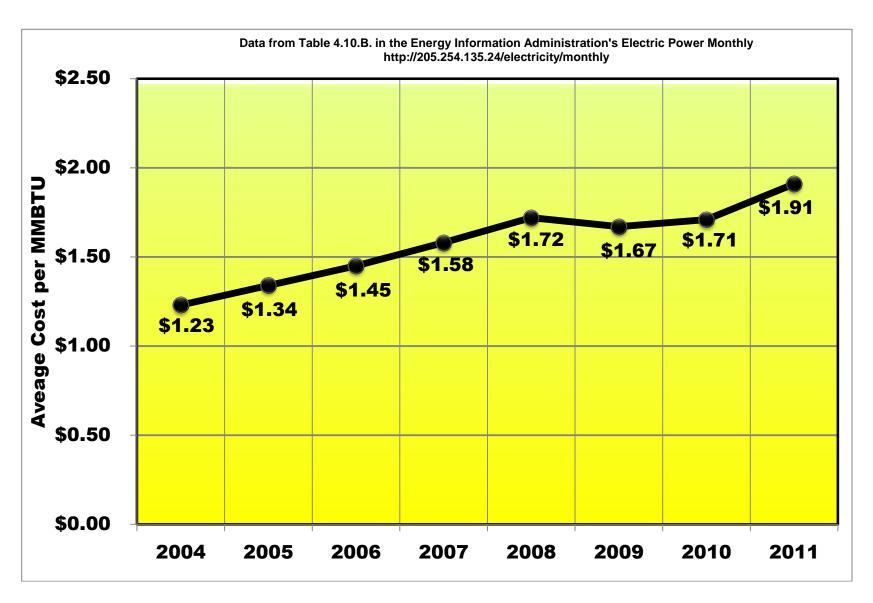
ALABAMA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



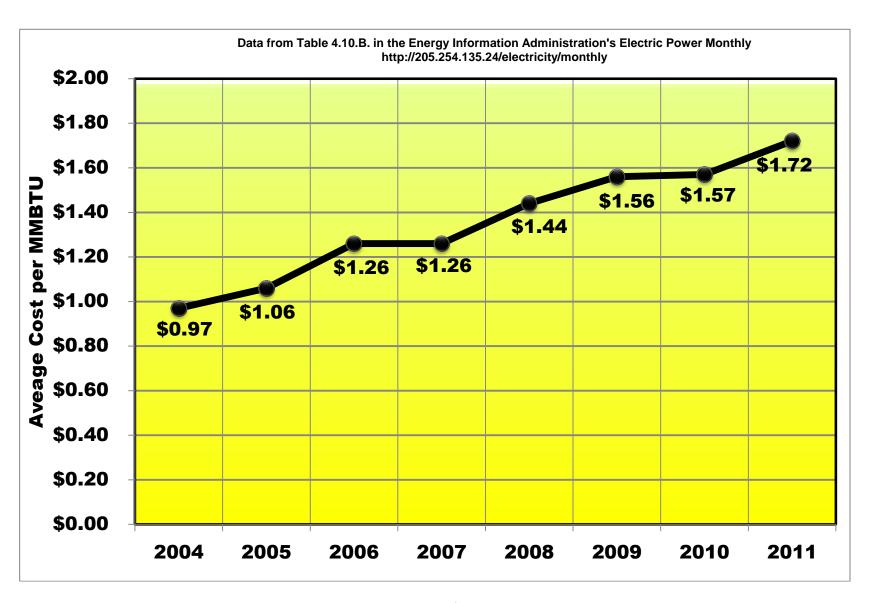
ARIZONA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



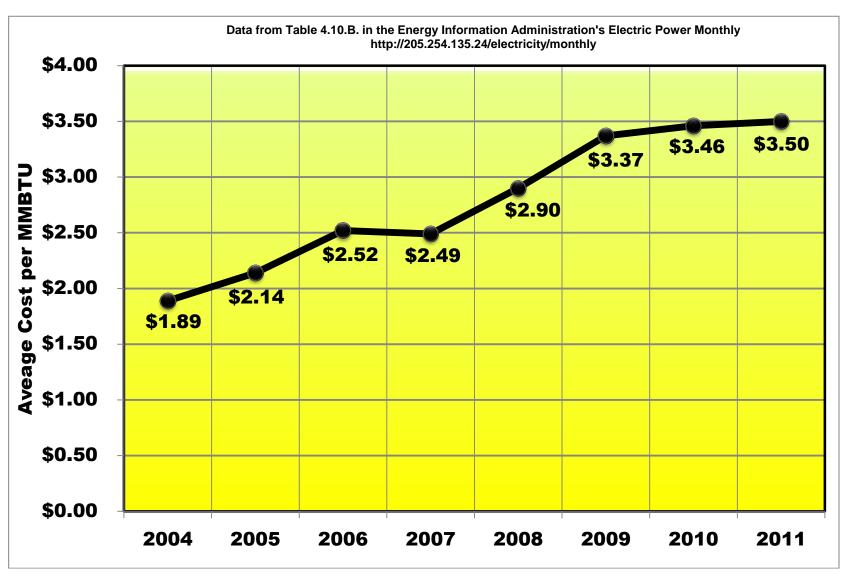
ARKANSAS AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



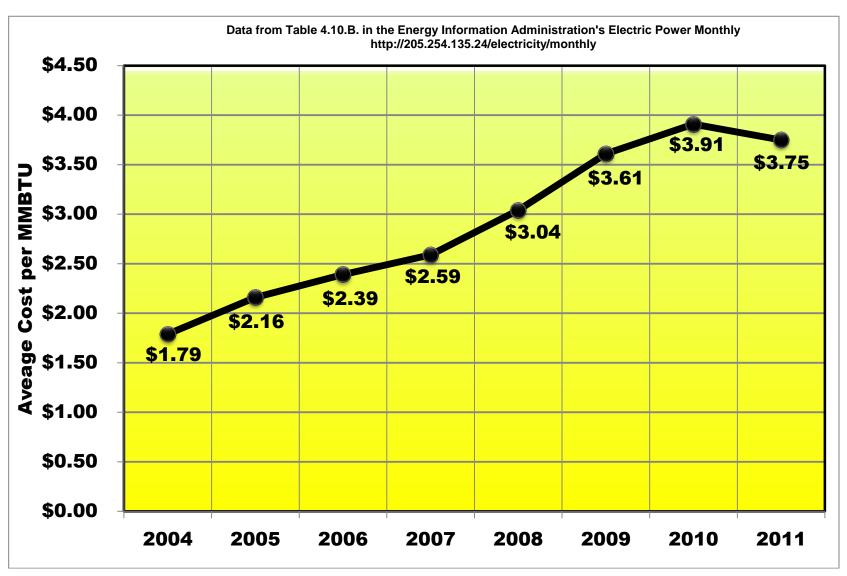
COLORADO AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



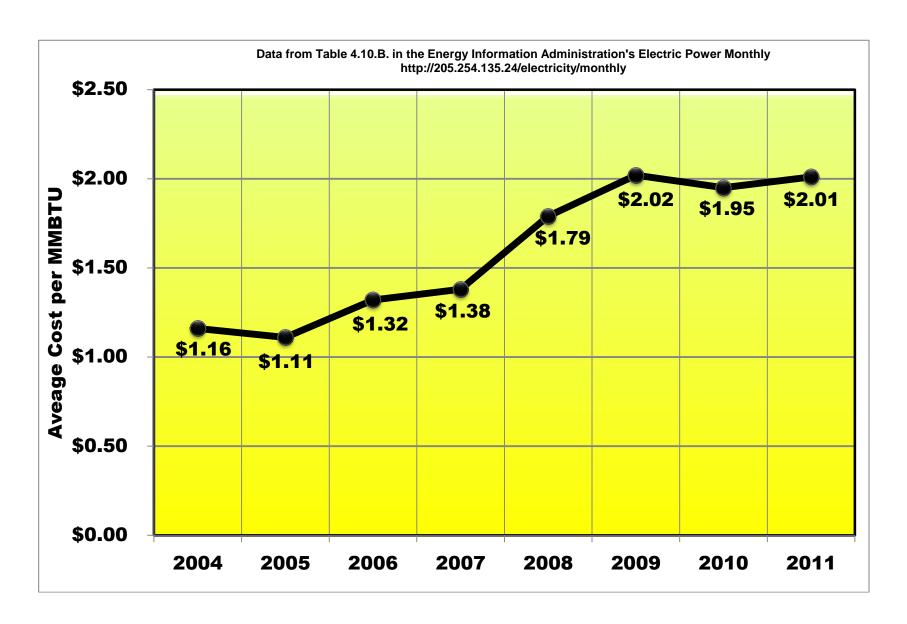
FLORIDA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



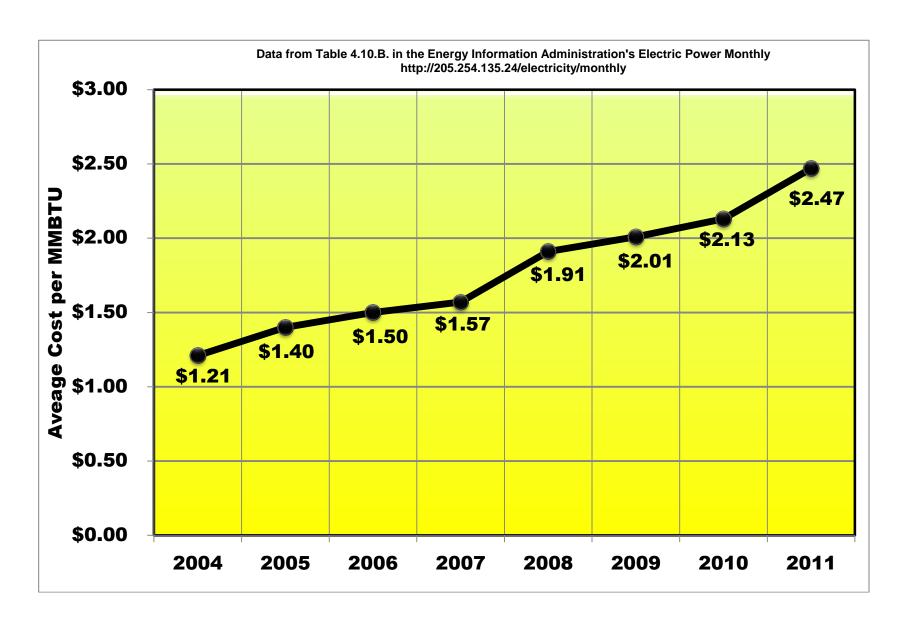
GEORGIA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



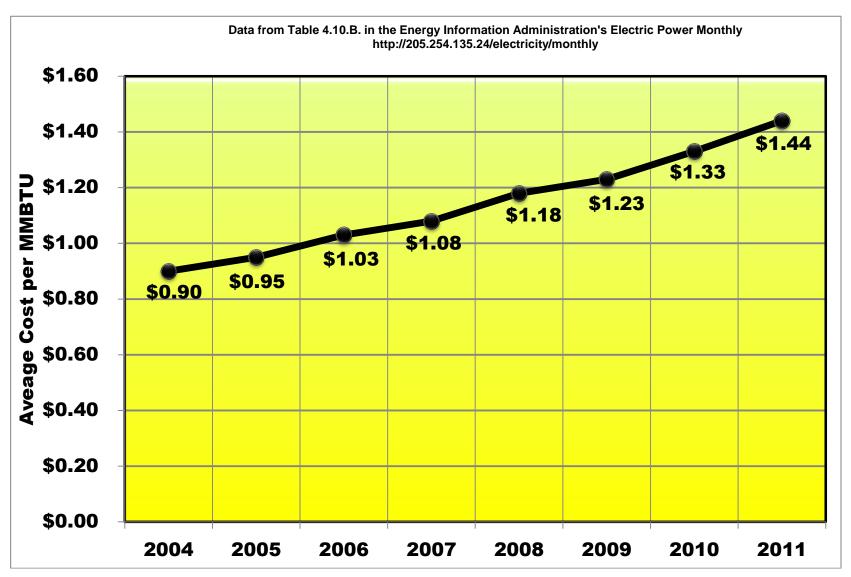
ILLINOIS AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



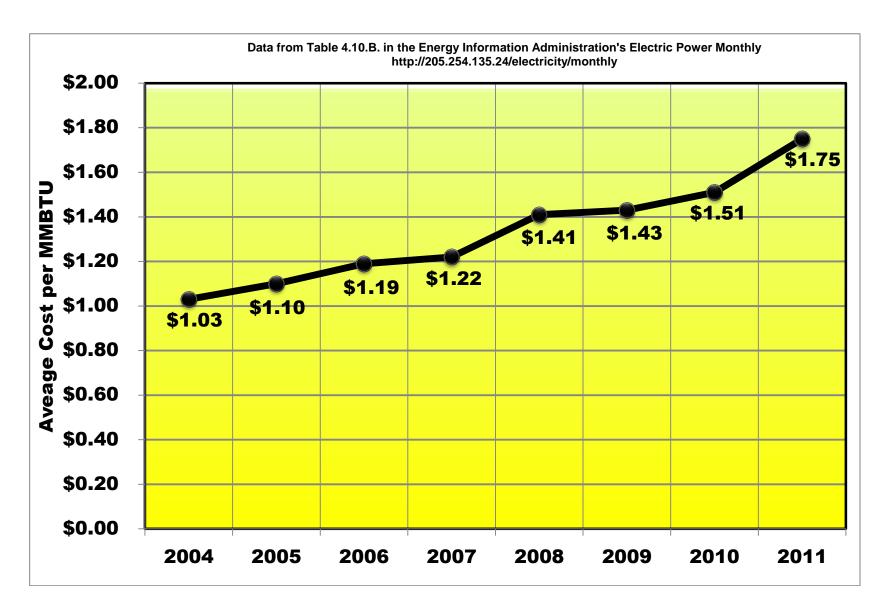
INDIANA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



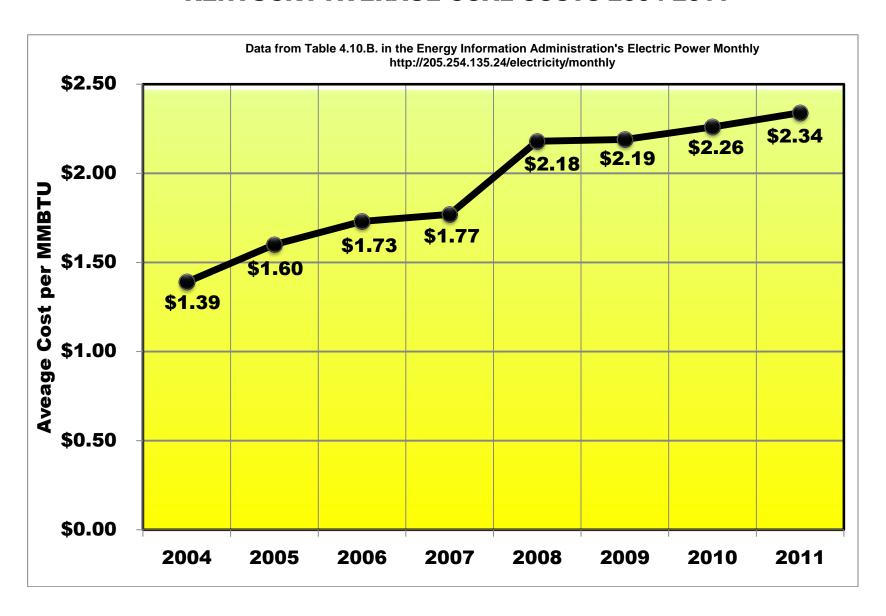
IOWA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



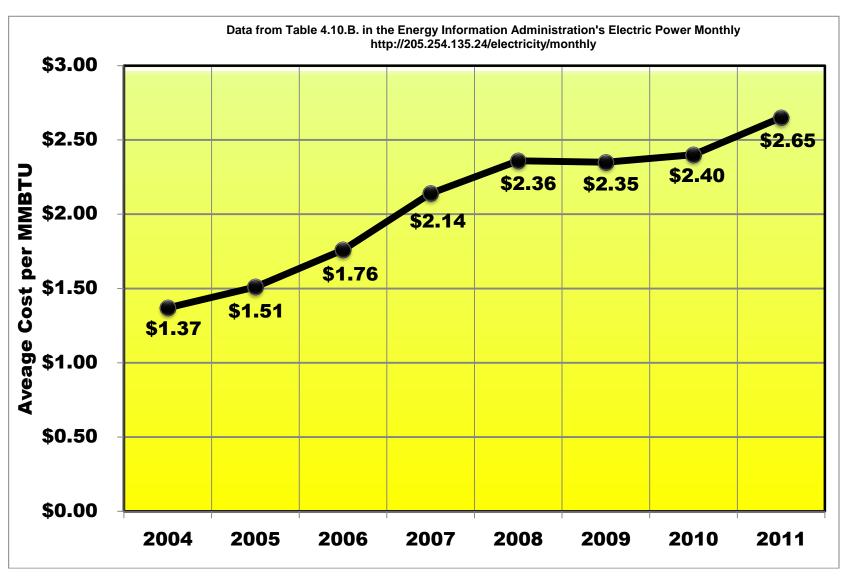
KANSAS AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



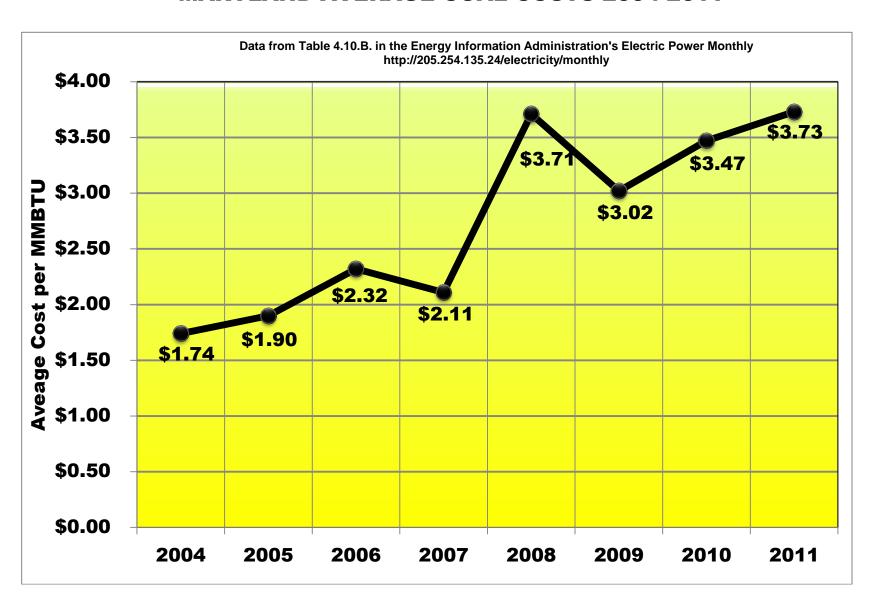
KENTUCKY AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



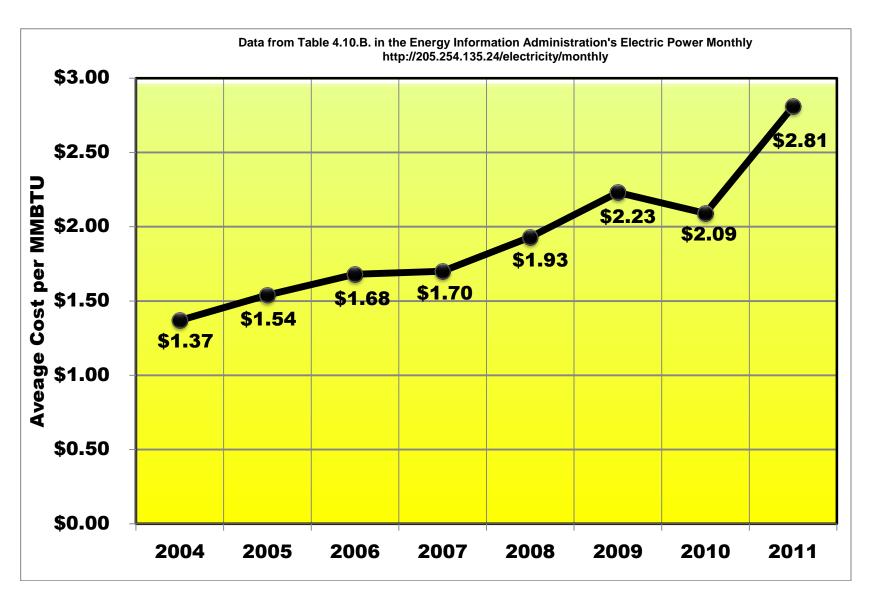
LOUISIANA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



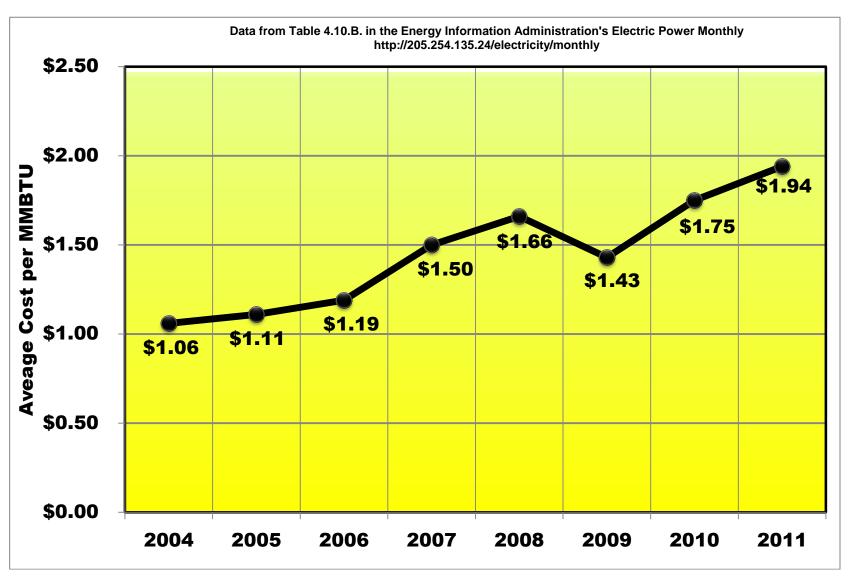
MARYLAND AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



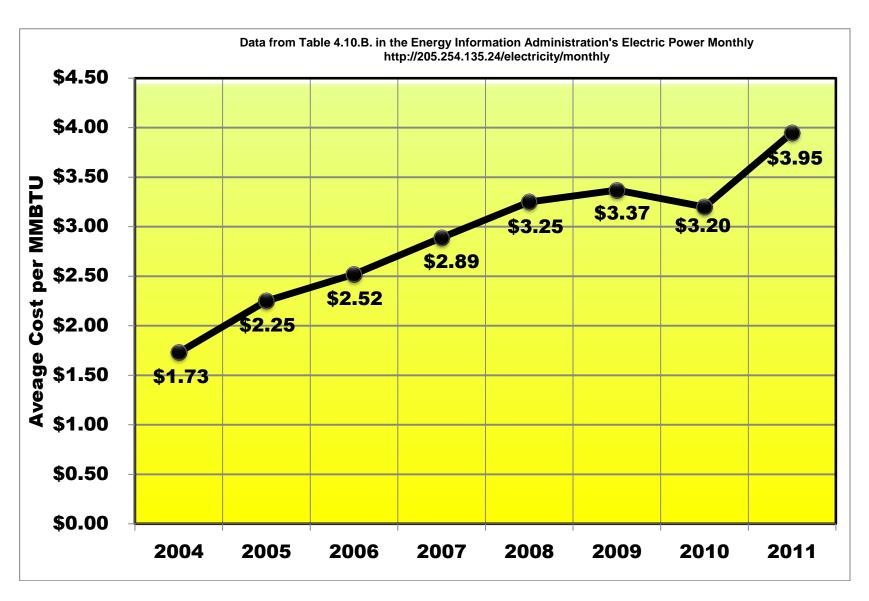
MICHIGAN AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



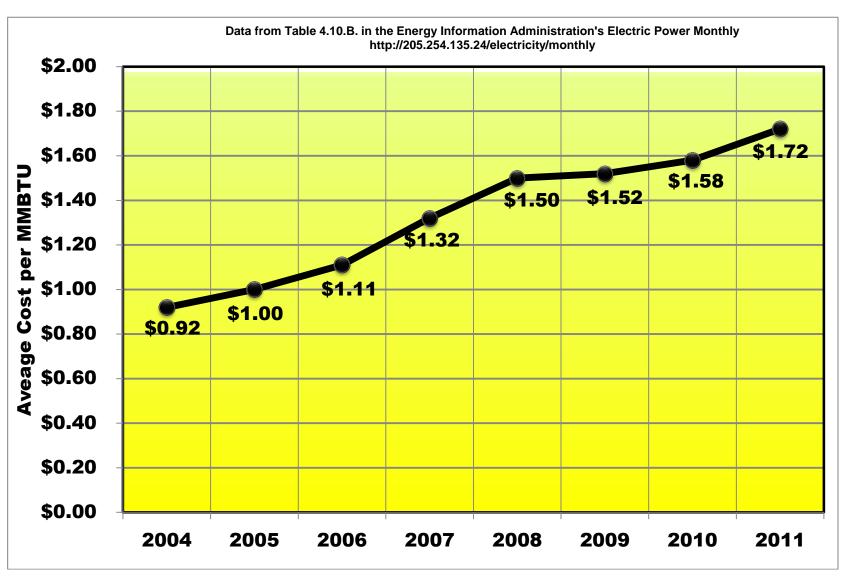
MINNESOTA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



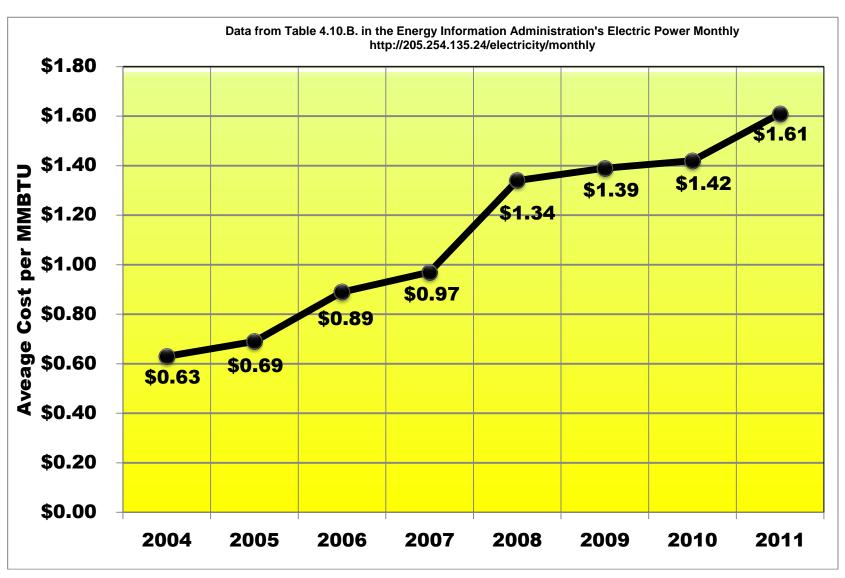
MISSISSIPPI AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



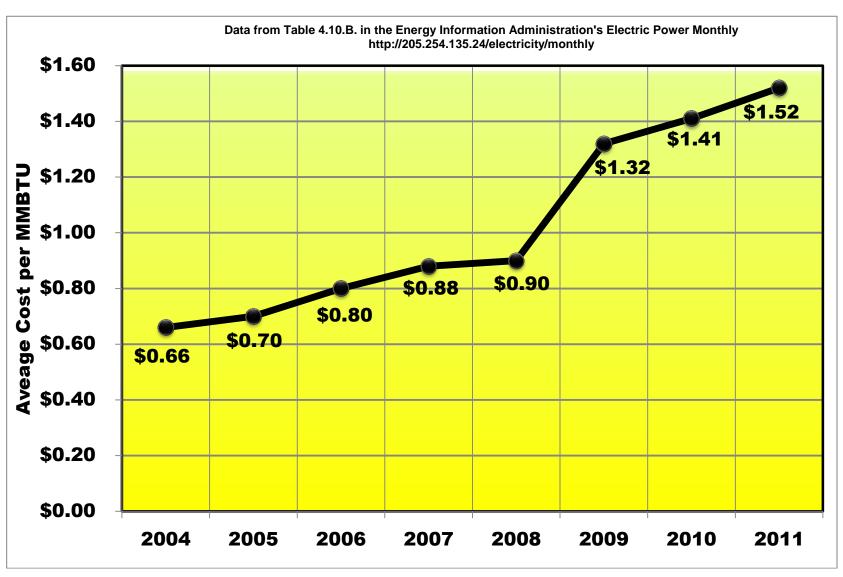
MISSOURI AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



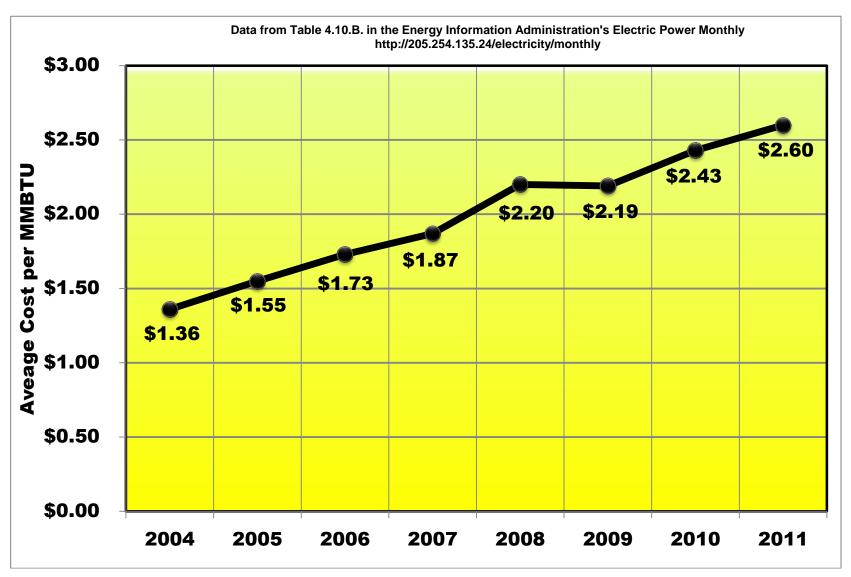
MONTANA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



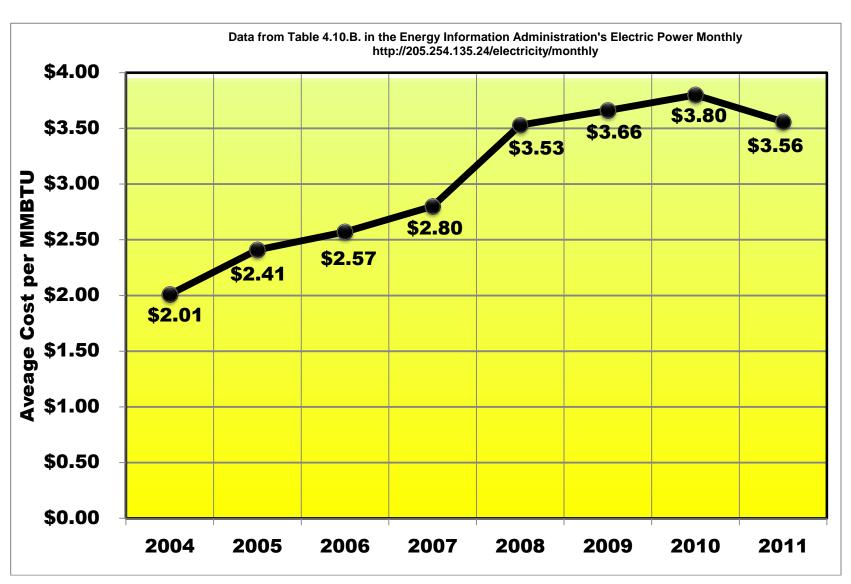
NEBRASKA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



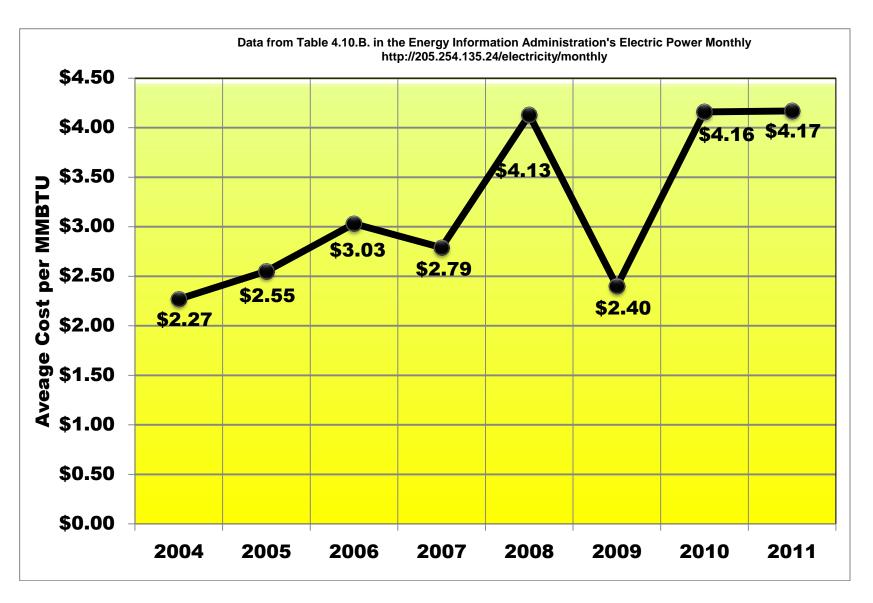
NEVADA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



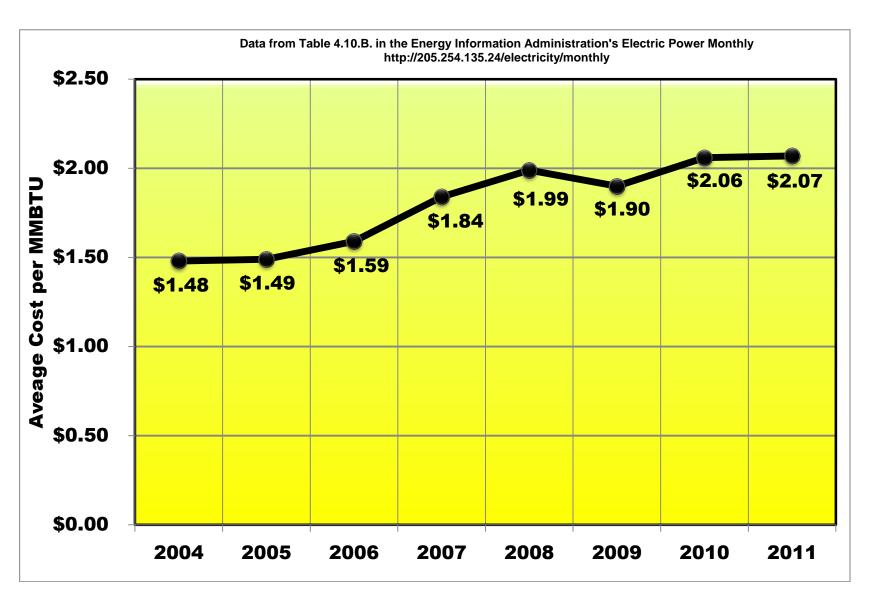
NEW HAMPSHIRE AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



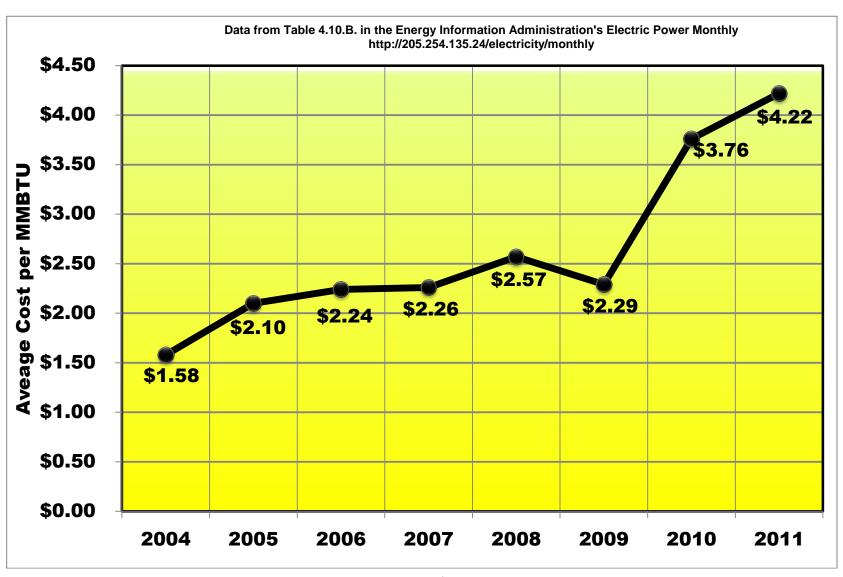
NEW JERSEY AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



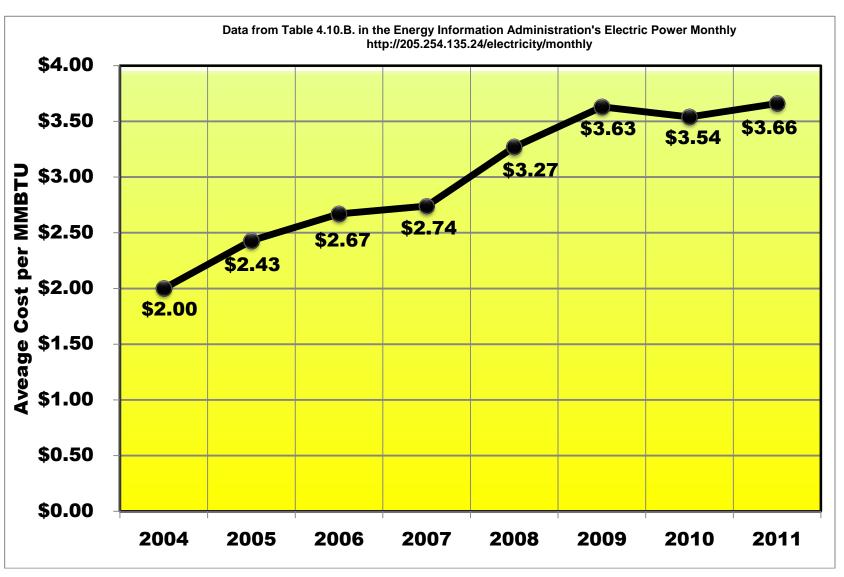
NEW MEXICO AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



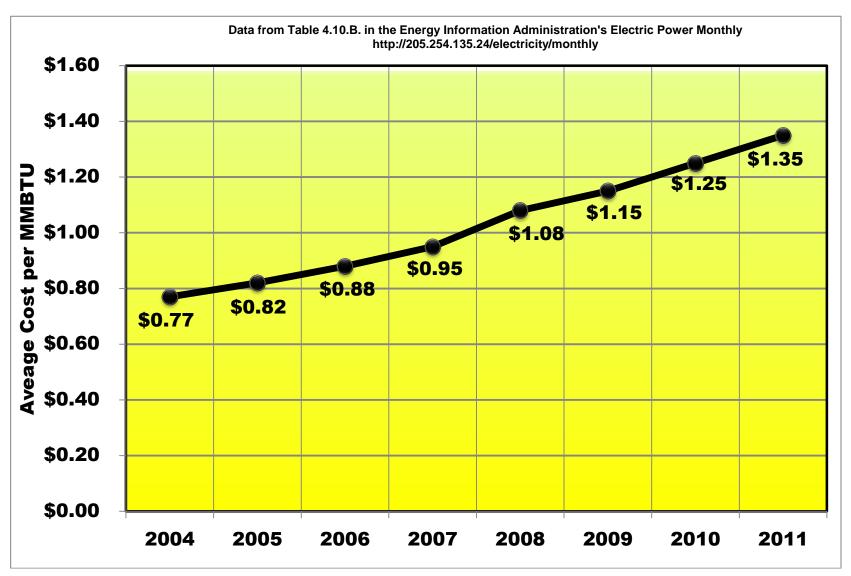
NEW YORK AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



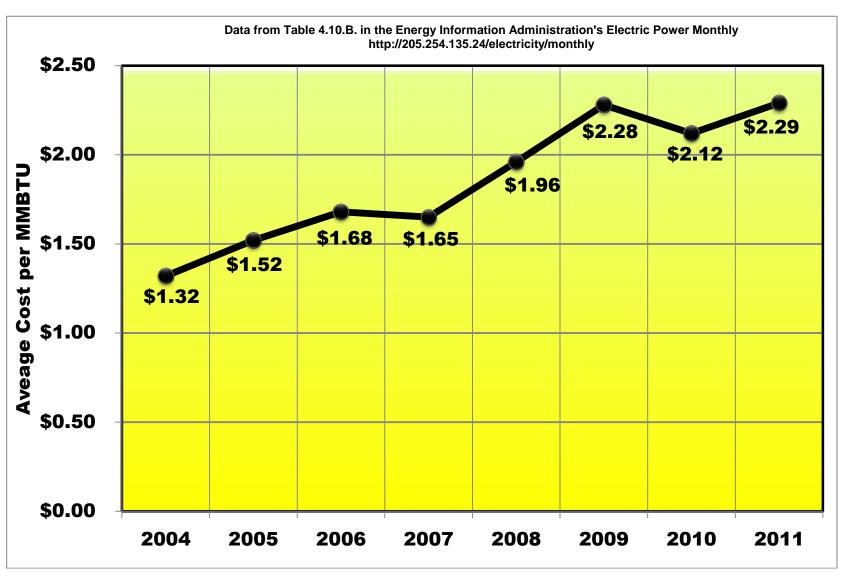
NORTH CAROLINA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



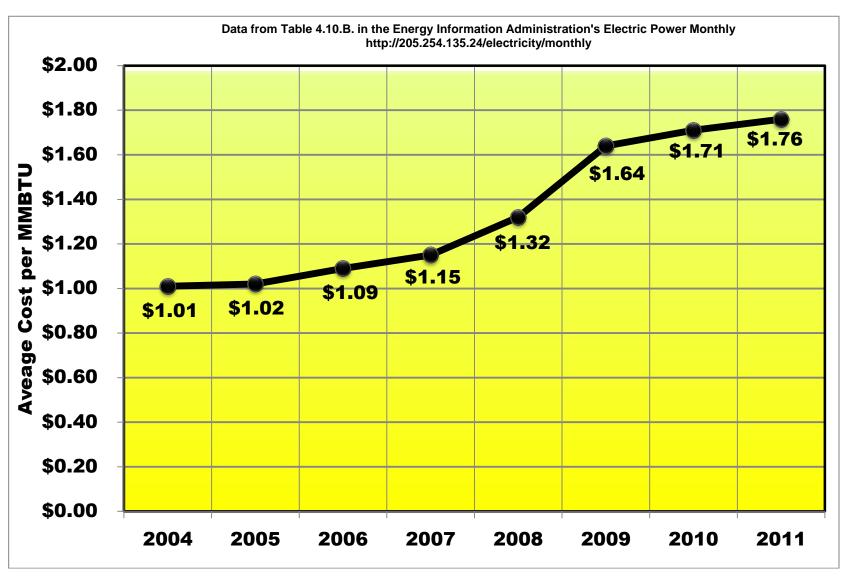
NORTH DAKOTA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



OHIO AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



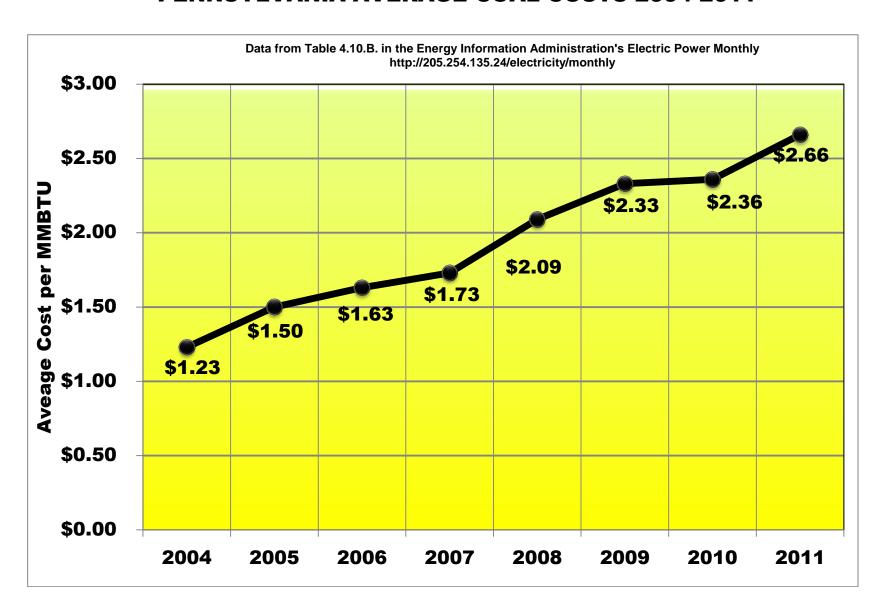
OKLAHOMA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



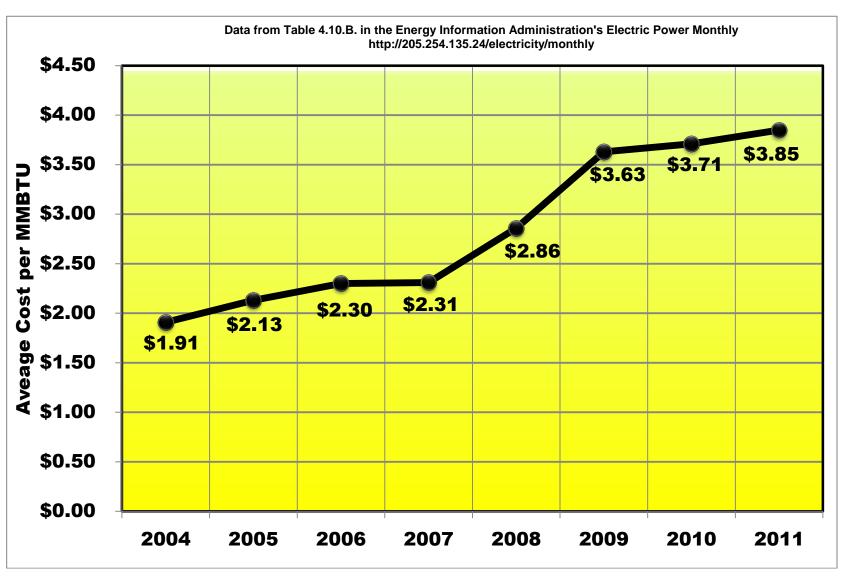
OREGON AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



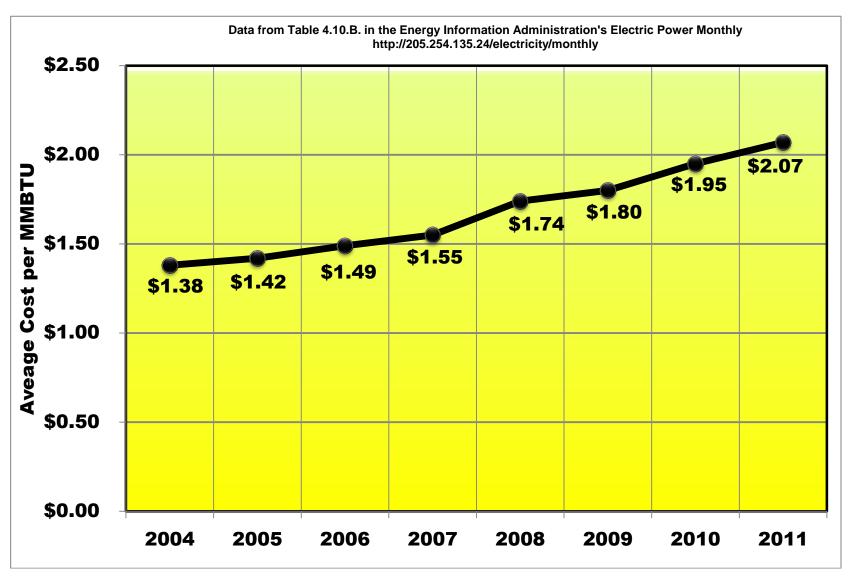
PENNSYLVANIA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



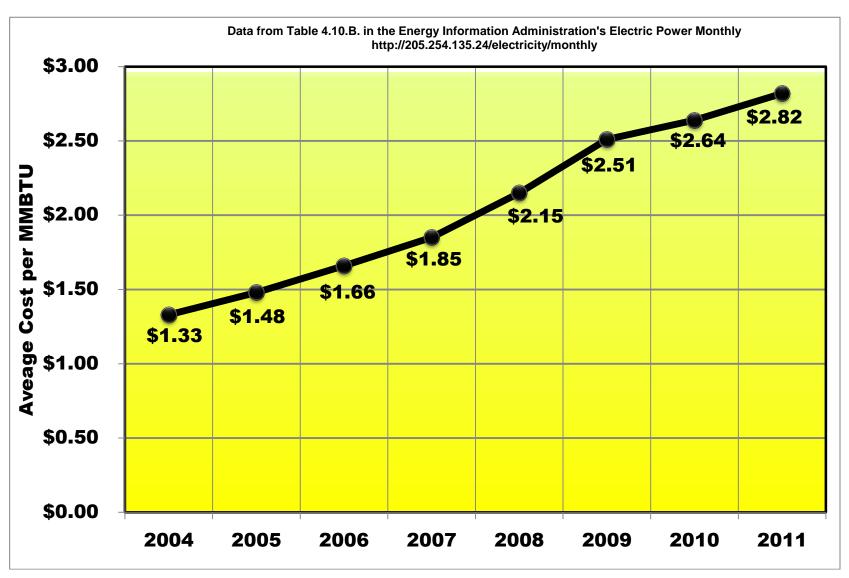
SOUTH CAROLINA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



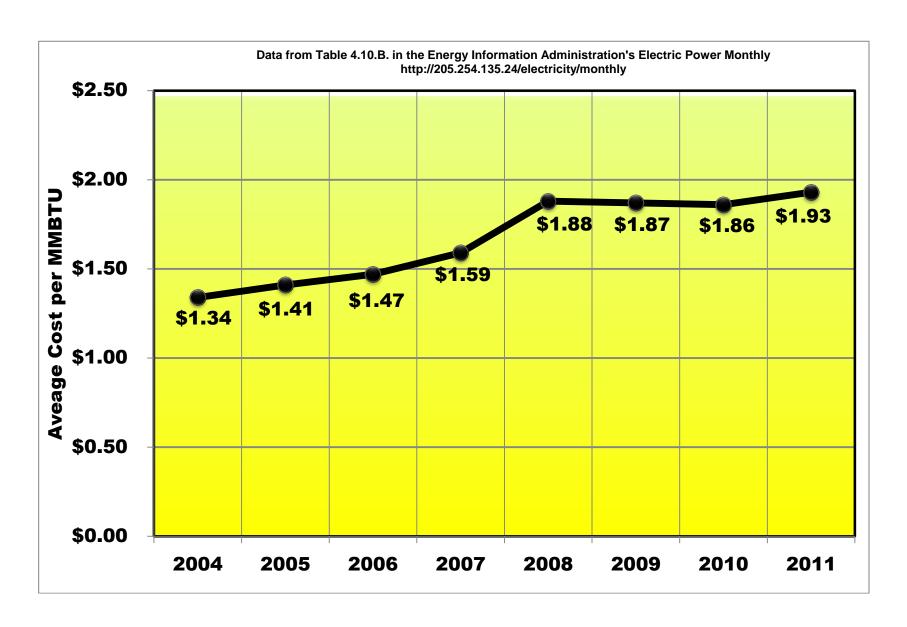
SOUTH DAKOTA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



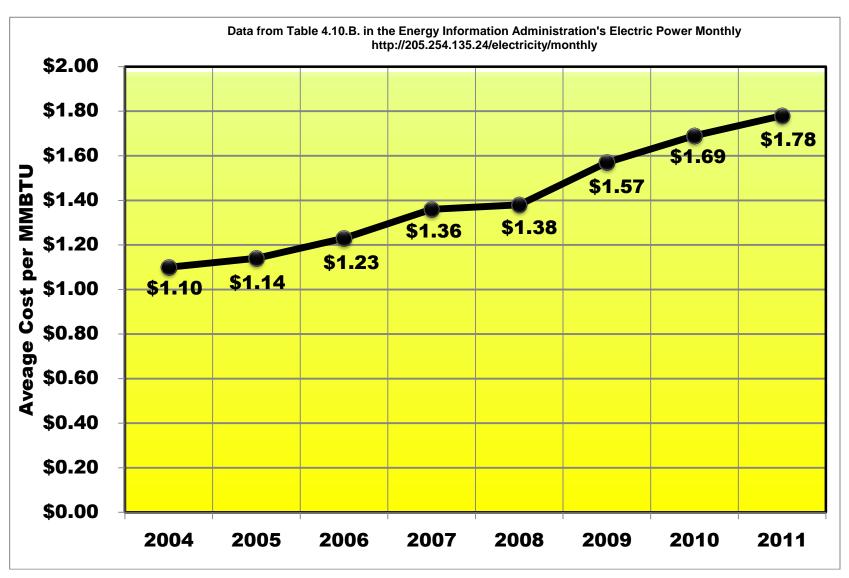
TENNESSEE AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



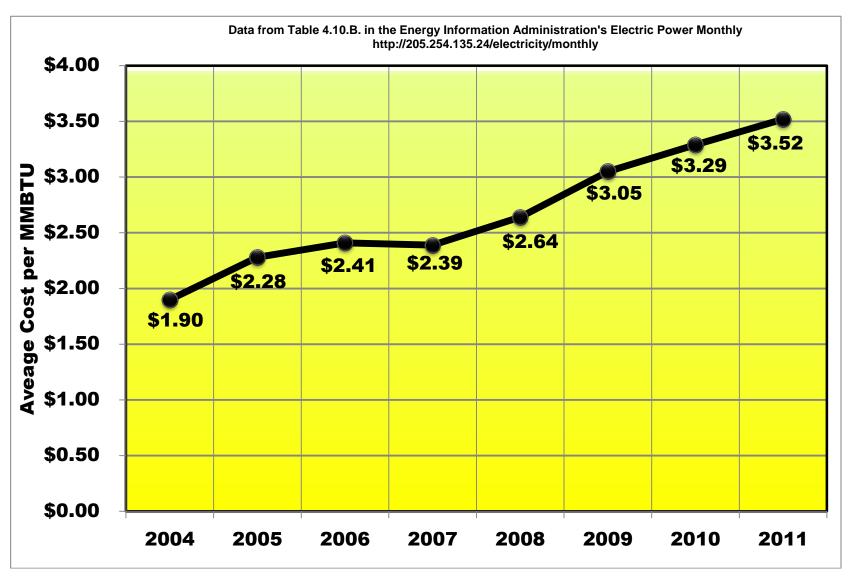
TEXAS AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



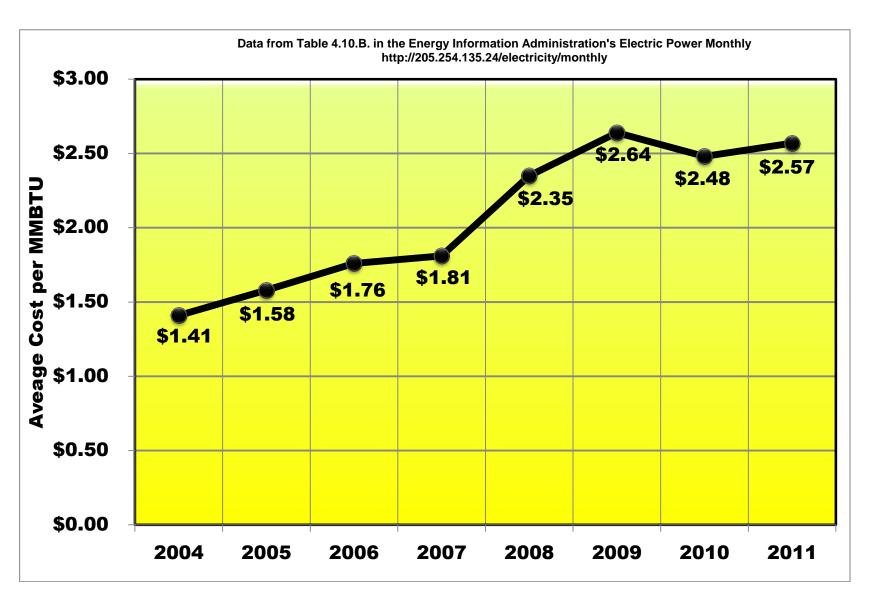
UTAH AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



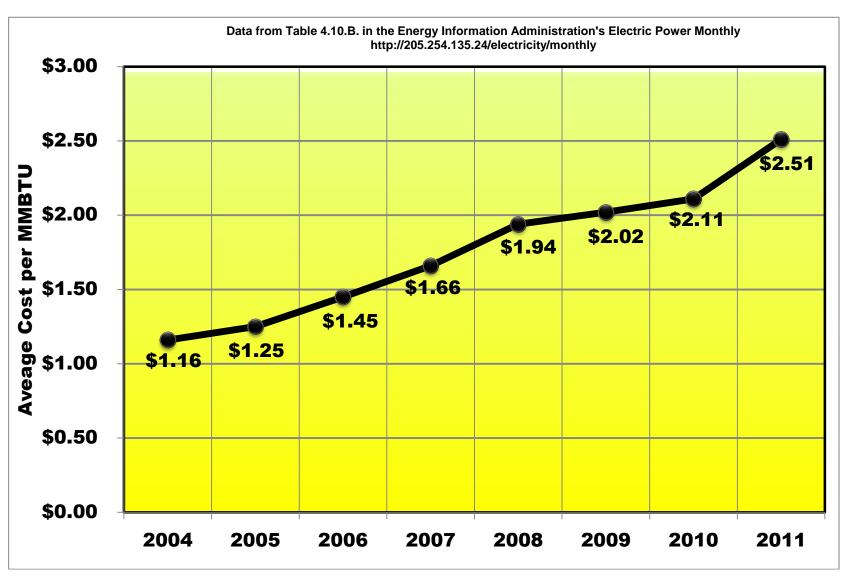
VIRGINIA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



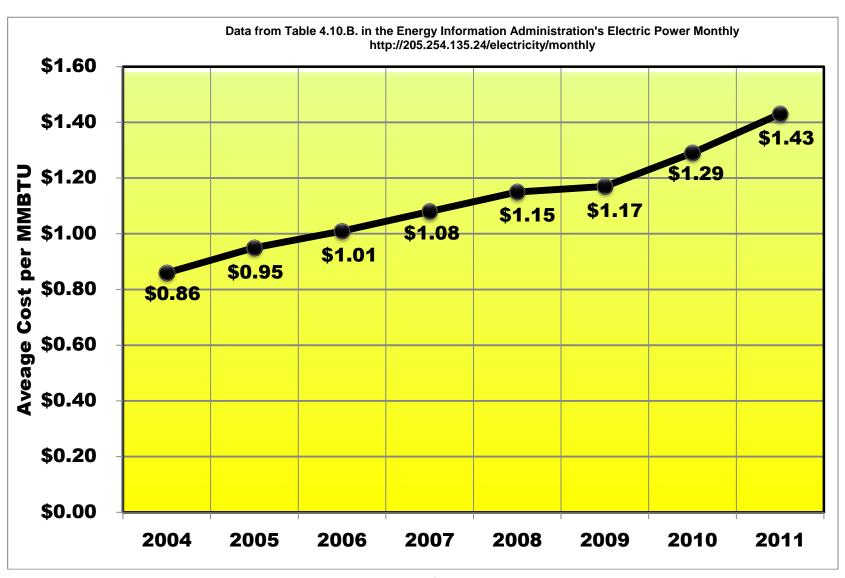
WEST VIRGINIA AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



WISCONSIN AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



WYOMING AVERAGE COAL COSTS 2004-2011



Appendix A—Cost of Coal By State 2004-2011

Data from Table 4.10.B. in the Energy Information Administration's Electric Power Monthly^{1*} http://205.254.135.24/electricity/monthly/

State	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Western States								
Alaska	unk	unk	unk	unk	\$1.46	\$1.10	\$1.46	\$1.65
Arizona	\$1.28	\$1.38	\$1.41	\$1.55	\$1.73	\$1.81	\$1.79	\$1.98
California2	\$1.94	\$2.04	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Colorado	\$0.97	\$1.06	\$1.26	\$1.26	\$1.44	\$1.56	\$1.57	\$1.72
Hawaii	n/a							
Idaho	n/a							
Montana	\$0.63	\$0.69	\$0.89	\$0.97	\$1.34	\$1.39	\$1.42	\$1.61
Nevada	\$1.36	\$1.55	\$1.73	\$1.87	\$2.20	\$2.19	\$2.43	\$2.60
New Mexico	\$1.48	\$1.49	\$1.59	\$1.84	\$1.99	\$1.90	\$2.06	\$2.07
Oregon	\$1.19	\$1.28	\$1.30	\$1.35	\$1.45	\$1.75	\$1.66	\$1.79
Utah	\$1.10	\$1.14	\$1.23	\$1.36	\$1.38	\$1.57	\$1.69	\$1.78
Washington	n/a							
Wyoming	\$0.86	\$0.95	\$1.01	\$1.08	\$1.15	\$1.17	\$1.29	\$1.43
Eastern States								
Alabama	\$1.51	\$1.74	\$2.07	\$2.09	\$2.70	\$2.67	\$2.81	\$2.87
Arkansas	\$1.23	\$1.34	\$1.45	\$1.58	\$1.72	\$1.67	\$1.71	\$1.91
Connecticut	n/a							
Delaware	unk							
Florida	\$1.89	\$2.14	\$2.52	\$2.49	\$2.90	\$3.37	\$3.46	\$3.50
Georgia	\$1.79	\$2.16	\$2.39	\$2.59	\$3.04	\$3.61	\$3.91	\$3.75
Illinois	\$1.16	\$1.11	\$1.32	\$1.38	\$1.79	\$2.02	\$1.95	\$2.01
Indiana	\$1.21	\$1.40	\$1.50	\$1.57	\$1.91	\$2.01	\$2.13	\$2.47
Iowa	\$0.90	\$0.95	\$1.03	\$1.08	\$1.18	\$1.23	\$1.33	\$1.44

State	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Kansas	\$1.03	\$1.10	\$1.19	\$1.22	\$1.41	\$1.43	\$1.51	\$1.75
Kentucky	\$1.39	\$1.60	\$1.73	\$1.77	\$2.18	\$2.19	\$2.26	\$2.34
Louisiana	\$1.37	\$1.51	\$1.76	\$2.14	\$2.36	\$2.35	\$2.40	\$2.65
Maine	n/a							
Maryland3	\$1.74	\$1.90	\$2.32	\$2.11	\$3.71	\$3.02	\$3.47	\$3.73
Massachusetts4	\$2.02	\$2.90	\$2.90	\$2.65	unk	unk	\$3.19	unk
Michigan	\$1.37	\$1.54	\$1.68	\$1.70	\$1.93	\$2.23	\$2.09	\$2.81
Minnesota	\$1.06	\$1.11	\$1.19	\$1.50	\$1.66	\$1.43	\$1.75	\$1.94
Mississippi	\$1.73	\$2.25	\$2.52	\$2.89	\$3.25	\$3.37	\$3.20	\$3.95
Missouri	\$0.92	\$1.00	\$1.11	\$1.32	\$1.50	\$1.52	\$1.58	\$1.72
Nebraska	\$0.66	\$0.70	\$0.80	\$0.88	\$0.90	\$1.32	\$1.41	\$1.52
New Hampshire	\$2.01	\$2.41	\$2.57	\$2.80	\$3.53	\$3.66	\$3.80	\$3.56
New Jersey5	\$2.27	\$2.55	\$3.03	\$2.79	\$4.13	\$2.40	\$4.16	\$4.17
New York	\$1.58	\$2.10	\$2.24	\$2.26	\$2.57	\$2.29	\$3.76	\$4.22
North Carolina	\$2.00	\$2.43	\$2.67	\$2.74	\$3.27	\$3.63	\$3.54	\$3.66
North Dakota	\$0.77	\$0.82	\$0.88	\$0.95	\$1.08	\$1.15	\$1.25	\$1.35
Ohio	\$1.32	\$1.52	\$1.68	\$1.65	\$1.96	\$2.28	\$2.12	\$2.29
Oklahoma	\$1.01	\$1.02	\$1.09	\$1.15	\$1.32	\$1.64	\$1.71	\$1.76
Pennsylvania6	\$1.23	\$1.50	\$1.63	\$1.73	\$2.09	\$2.33	\$2.36	\$2.66
Rhode Island	n/a							
South Carolina	\$1.91	\$2.13	\$2.30	\$2.31	\$2.86	\$3.63	\$3.71	\$3.85
South Dakota	\$1.38	\$1.42	\$1.49	\$1.55	\$1.74	\$1.80	\$1.95	\$2.07
Tennessee	\$1.33	\$1.48	\$1.66	\$1.85	\$2.15	\$2.51	\$2.64	\$2.82
Texas	\$1.34	\$1.41	\$1.47	\$1.59	\$1.88	\$1.87	\$1.86	\$1.93
Vermont	n/a							
Virginia	\$1.90	\$2.28	\$2.41	\$2.39	\$2.64	\$3.05	\$3.29	\$3.52
West Virginia	\$1.41	\$1.58	\$1.76	\$1.81	\$2.35	\$2.64	\$2.48	\$2.57
Wisconsin	\$1.16	\$1.25	\$1.45	\$1.66	\$1.94	\$2.02	\$2.11	\$2.51
U.S. Total	\$1.34	\$1.52	\$1.68	\$1.77	\$2.06	\$2.23	\$2.27	\$2.41