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## Foreign coal imports feared by Virginia miners

RICHMOND (UPI) — Virginia Power plans to test burn a shipment of South American coal in efforts to find a cheaper source of fuel for its coal-burning plants, utility officials said.

But mining officials said the 30,000-ton foreign coal shipment represents more than a possible savings to Veeco customers — it could mean Virginia coal mines will lose substantial business.

Veeco spokesman James McDonald Jr. said the 30,000-ton coal shipment arrived from Colombia last week, *The Richmond Times-Dispatch* reported in Saturday editions.

"We'll probably begin burning in the next several days," said McDonald.

In Virginia, foreign coal shipments have increased steadily over the past years, striking fear in the hearts of coal miners in western Virginia, where unemployment has topped 20 percent.

While Veeco has not received cost estimates on future coal shipments, McDonald said the utility is looking for

an inexpensive source of low-sulphur coal that will meet air quality standards, the newspaper reported.

Veeco expects to burn about 10 million tons of coal at its Virginia plants next year.

"Although the company would prefer to buy its coal regionally, preliminary studies indicate that Colombian coal offers the potential for significant savings," said McDonald.

Colombian coal, already used by some Florida utilities, has lower production and transportation costs compared to domestic sources, he said.

Michael Quillen, president of Paramount Mining Corp., said Veeco's initial 30,000-ton shipment does not pose a significant threat to the state's coal industry.

But if the same amount were brought into the country on a monthly basis, the state's coal industry would definitely feel it, Quillen said.

L. Blaine Carter, executive director of the Virginia Coal Association, said

## State board urged to require coating coal

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. (UPI) — State Air Pollution Control Board officials are backing a plan requiring companies to coat coal with a chemical sealer that would prevent dust from blowing up in human noses and throats.

If approved, the coal dust controls would be the strictest in the nation and would reduce the amount of microscopic pollutants statewide — not just near coal terminals, air board officials said.

A study of coal dust problems near the Tidewater shipping terminals revealed that 1,000 tons of the 90,000 tons of coal shipped in open carriers to Newport News and Norfolk terminals

disappears into the air.

The coal is not dropping off railroad cars as was once believed, said Ramon Minx, director of the Tidewater regional office of the State Air Pollution Control Board.

"If you don't find it stacked up along the railroad tracks, it has to go somewhere," Minx said.

The coal dust study revealed that coal piles emit dust in fine particles equivalent to a gas, said Minx. The microscopic particles can travel great distances and are easily inhaled by humans, he added.

State scientists are studying coal emissions to determine if they pose

health problems for people living near coal storage piles or along the paths of coal trains.

If determined to be a health risk, the state may require coal dust controls, air board officials said.

But coal companies would be required to prove that coal dust is not hazardous to the public, Minx said.

State officials predicted the controls would help, not hurt, the state's coal companies.

The sealant proposed for coal shipped in open carriers would seal the 1,000 tons of coal that disappears daily in the form of dust.

Minx said.

## Business uses technology to take on imports

NASHVILLE (UPI) — Technology is the key to underpricing and outproducing foreign competitors, a local clothing manufacturer has discovered.

"We're fighting the imports and seem to be succeeding. Now we are sold up through August 1986, so we must have done something right," said Abe Danksy, who started Tennessee Shirtworks in 1977.

The company, owned by Danksy and his son, Steve, was recently recognized nationally for using computerized sewing machines, experienced leadership and an enthusiastic work force to thrive in a market plagued by rising costs and foreign competition.

The Nashville-based company sells apparel to Wal-Mart, K-Mart, Target and other mass merchandisers. Danksy is chair-

man and Steve Danksy, a certified public accountant, is president.

Apparel Industry Magazine, a national trade publication, listed Tennessee Shirtworks among 10-AI Star Award winners. The annual award is presented to honor progressive attitudes toward new technology in the apparel industry.

"We are really proud of this. The recognition is something very nice for the company, for me and for my son, Steve," said Danksy, who has worked in the apparel industry for 60 years.

In addition to the technology, the Danksys believe two other ingredients are essential to compete effectively in the marketplace.

"It must be quality merchandise and you must deliver on time," Steve Danksy said. "The

delivery is very, very important. In the last three and a half years we have never been late."

The company produces between 4,500 and 5,000 dozen blouses and shirts per week in plants in Nashville, Portland and J. Lawrenceburg using less than 300 employees statewide.

"We use the automated equipment to increase productivity," Danksy said. Some functions can be done three to five times faster than by ordinary sewing machines, he said.

"It doesn't eliminate jobs, it creates jobs," Danksy said.

Without using the technology the company would have gone out of business thus eliminating all jobs, he explained.

Attitudes among employees are very important, Danksy added.

"These people really care

about their jobs," said Abe Danksy, who has hired a high percentage of Latinos, blacks and other minorities in his factory.

Danksy said he deliberately hired minorities because his parents were Russian immigrants and he remembers the barriers they had to overcome to succeed.

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### On the birdwatch

George Stubbs, of Rocky Mount, Va., points out a bird Saturday to his father, Lewis Stubbs of Clemson, S.C., as they were birdwatching in Patrick County, Va. The men were participating in the National Audubon Society's annual Christmas Bird Count, where birdwatchers across the country conduct a census of the bird population.

## TEA president maintains top 'ladder' rungs need work

NASHVILLE (UPI) — Teachers are fed up with paperwork and changes need to be made in the upper levels of the career ladder program or the whole master teacher plan should be done away with, one education leader says.

Tennessee Education Association President Tom Cannon says teachers, principals and superintendents are displeased with the career ladder.

"Unless something is done to change it, it's going to end up being repealed because it just will not work in its present form," Cannon said.

"Teachers in every survey we've seen reject the concept of the upper rungs of the career ladder and I've seen nothing to happen during this current school year to do anything but increase the negative feeling about the career ladder," he said Friday.

"Everything we've seen shows 85 to 90 percent say they do not feel it is a fair and effective way to award teachers."

The career ladder program was passed into law in 1984 as part of the Better Schools program. It is designed to reward outstanding teachers with bonus pay and greater responsibilities. TEA, the state's largest teachers' union, says many outstanding teachers did not get fair evaluations last year.

"At the last TEA board meeting there was a motion passed to establish a committee to study ways to modify career levels 2 and 3 of the career ladder," Cannon said.

"There are parts of it that teachers are very unhappy with, that principals and superintendents

are unhappy with. It's not working and we're going to look at the ways we can modify the career ladder. There are parts of it now that teachers just will not accept," Cannon said.

Some teachers believe career ladder evaluations are not objective and some of complained that their state evaluators contradict each other, Cannon said.

The TEA president also said the program's administrative costs are too high.

"A lot of the money is not going to teachers. It's going to state evaluators or to pay hotel rooms or to pay travel expenses," Cannon said.

Less than half of the teachers evaluated last year for career 2 and 3 got them. Those levels bring pay hikes of \$2,000 to \$7,000.

"I would certainly not rule out the possibility that we would seek sponsors for legislation dealing with the career ladder," he said.

"If the state Department of Education is unwilling to make changes, if it won't work and we can't make it work, then it needs to be repealed out of the law," Cannon said.

But Keri Hunt, special assistant to the governor, says the program is working.

The pay for performance, which was at the heart of the career ladder, was a key factor in the decision of the legislature to dramatically increase funding for education in Tennessee. The program is working," Hunt said.

Teachers have an appeals process if they are dissatisfied with the results of their career ladder placements.

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