



Lake Carriers' Association

For Immediate Release

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High Inventories Slow Lakes Coal Trade In June

CLEVELAND---High inventories of coal at power plants trimmed the coal trade on the Great Lakes in June. Shipments totaled 4.3 million net tons, a decrease of nearly 14 percent compared to a year ago. The trade was also off 4.3 percent compared to the month's 5-year average.

While light loading was not the dominant factor in the June decrease, the issue remains important. Coal users will need to rebuild stockpiles for the winter months. The locks at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, close on January 15, so after that date, there will be no coal shipments from Superior, Wisconsin, and Thunder Bay, Ontario, to customers below the Soo Locks until March 25. The coal trade from Lake Erie ports generally is silent from late January until early or mid-March. Therefore, as the season nears its end, it will be important that vessels be able to carry full loads, but decades of inadequate funding for dredging on the Lakes mean full loads are the exception rather than the rule.

For the year, the Lakes coal trade totals 16.6 million net tons, a slight increase over the same point in 2005. Coal shipments are 8.6 percent ahead of the 5-year average for the first half of the year.

Lake Carriers' Association represents 18 American corporations that operate 62 U.S.-Flag vessels on the Great Lakes. These vessels carry the raw materials that drive the nation's economy: Iron ore and fluxstone for the steel industry, limestone and cement for the construction industry, coal for power generation.... Collectively, these vessels can transport as much as 125 million tons of cargo a year when high water levels offset the lack of adequate dredging of Great Lakes ports and waterways. More information is available at www.lcaships.com.

Source: Lake Carriers' Association

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Information based on data from knowledgeable sources. However, accuracy cannot be guaranteed. Lake Carriers' Association assumes no legal responsibility for the outcome of decisions or commitments made on the basis of this information. This report represents the views of Lake Carriers' Association and may not necessarily represent the views of its individual members.

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The Association Representing Operators of U.S.-Flag Vessels on the Great Lakes

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