

Advocacy Group Says Coal is Risky

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SAN FRANCISCO, June 16 (UPI) -- Regulatory uncertainty, market volatility and construction costs make coal a risky financial investment, said U.S. advocacy group **As You Sow**.

As You Sow in a so-called White Paper said public utility commissions have canceled plans for more than 150 new coal-fired power plants recently. This amounts to about \$243 billion in investment decisions, the group said.

The group, which focuses on corporate social responsibility and environmental enforcement issues, said regulatory uncertainty, commodity risks and increased construction costs makes investing in coal inherently risky.

"(T)hese risks combine to make current and future investments in coal-dependent utilities and coal mining companies exceedingly precarious," the group said in a statement.

The International Energy Agency, however, said coal use is expected to increase unless there is a dramatic policy shift from consumer nations.

The IEA said coal is the second-largest source of primary energy in the world after oil and the first for the generation of electricity. Coal has met 47 percent of new electricity demand for the past 10 years, the agency said.

