

Ukraine Must Buy Russian Coal for Winter

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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An excavator is seen near coal piles at the Kholodnaya Balka mine in Makiivka, outside Donetsk on Nov. 5, 2014.

Ukraine will be forced to buy coal from Russia to get through the winter, a serious setback to the country's efforts to lessen energy dependence on its powerful neighbor, Ukrainian Energy Minister Yuriy Prodan said Wednesday.

Conflict between pro-Russian rebels and Ukrainian forces in Ukraine's industrial east has disrupted coal supplies to thermal power plants (TPP), which provide around 40 percent of the country's electricity, and has left reserves critically low ahead of the cold winter months.

Earlier this year the government signed a deal to import 1 million tons of coal from South Africa and has already received three deliveries. But the supplier this week discontinued shipments amid allegations within Ukrainian media of irregularities within the deal. Prodan

on Wednesday denied the allegations.

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