

# No New Coal Action Toolkit

National Day of Action against Coal and Coal Finance; November 14-15

Organized by the Greenpeace and Rainforest Action Network

*"I can't understand why there aren't rings of young people blocking bulldozers, and preventing them from constructing coal-fired power plants."*

-Al Gore August 2007

*"We are here because now is the time to take greater action as individuals, as communities, and as a country to create a sustainable future and stop the destruction of our homes."*

-Wise County Virginia resident Hannah Morgan while locked to a steel barrel blocking the entrance to a coal plant construction site. September 2008

## Introduction

**Things are heating up for the coal barons and the banks and politicians that love them. Across the planet a mass movement has emerged challenging King Coal from Appalachia to Australia to the coal fields of England. We're organized, smart and creative. Now we're taking the action on the coal front to another level.**

**Greenpeace, Rainforest Action Network and friends are calling for a National Day of Action against Coal and Coal Finance.**

On the Day of Action, we're calling for:

**\*No New Coal Plants:** Coal is the largest contributor of greenhouse gas emissions causing global warming. The Bush-Cheney regime has teamed up with the fossil fuel industry to build over 100 new coal fired power plants across the nation.

**\*End Mountaintop Removal and other forms of destructive strip mining:** Coal extraction has decapitated 500 Appalachian Mountains and poisoned water, land and communities from Arizona to Appalachia.

**\*Don't Foreclose on the Climate, Stop Financing Coal:** Wall Street's biggest banks, Citi and Bank of America, are the two of the largest funders of coal and climate change in the world.

**\*Support a Clean Energy Revolution:** No "Clean Coal" No Carbon, Capture and Storage. No Nuclear. Wind, solar, energy efficiency and the creation of green jobs are the changes we need to see in the world to make a living clean energy revolution.

**BUT**, RAN and Greenpeace can only do so much and people don't need us to organize their own coal and coal finance actions. If you live in place that is impacted by coal extraction or coal combustion, or headquarters coal and utility companies, then by all means plan something for the Day of Action. If you live in a place without coal or utility operations or offices, please look towards the financiers of coal. Or look towards your elected officials positions on coal and climate.



### Finding a Target

If you're not sure who they are, the first step to taking action on King Coal in your community is finding them! Here are a few leads to pursue:

1. New Coal Plants: <http://www.sierraclub.org/maps/coal.asp>
2. Existing Coal Plants: <http://www.dirtykilowatts.org>
3. Local electricity provider information: <http://www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/energy-and-you/how-clean.html>
4. Mountaintop removal mining sites near or connected to you: <http://www.ilovemountains.org/myconnection/>
5. Bank of America and Citi branch locations can be found at <https://www.bankofamerica.com/index.jsp> and [http://www.citi.com/domain/index\\_a.htm](http://www.citi.com/domain/index_a.htm)

### Educate and Organize Your Community/Campus

1. Get a group together and organize/host a movie night featuring recent films about coal extraction, coal combustion or energy issues.
  - A. Contact [dirtymoney@ran.org](mailto:dirtymoney@ran.org) for movies.
  - B. Find a venue [it could be somebody's house, a classroom on campus or a local community space].
  - C. Promote and advertise the film screening.
  - D. Brief the audience on the connections between Wall Street, coal extraction and combustion.
  - E. These are good opportunities to pass around a sign up sheet and see if anyone is interested in doing more.
2. Get a Group together to organize teach-ins on the role that Wall Street plays in financing mountaintop removal, coal fired power plants, climate change, deforestation and human rights violations
  - A. Contact [dirtymoney@ran.org](mailto:dirtymoney@ran.org) for speaker suggestions.
  - B. Find a venue [it could be somebody's house, a classroom on campus or a local community space].
  - C. Promote and advertise the event.
  - D. Brief the audience on the connections between Wall Street, coal extraction and combustion.
  - E. These are good opportunities to pass around a sign up sheet and see if anyone is interested in doing more.
3. Get a group together and organize a petition drive on your campus, or in your community, asking Wall Street to adopt environmentally and socially responsible policies.
4. Get a group together, host a party and draft letters to your school or community newspaper and other media outlets about how the coal industry is destroying the climate and how Wall Street is financing it

## Menu of Actions

1. **Close your bank accounts**— Do you have a Bank of America or Citi bank account?
  - A. If yes, then plan on a day when you can visit your local branch
  - B. If no, it's not hard to open one a few weeks in advance online at <https://www.bankofamerica.com/index.jsp> and [http://www.citi.com/domain/index\\_a.htm](http://www.citi.com/domain/index_a.htm)
  - C. Once you have an account and plan a day, gather up a number of friends who also have accounts
  - D. Organize a little street theater or protest to occur outside while you and other account-holders go inside and close your accounts.
  - E. Once inside and begin closing your account, make sure you give the bank employees information as to why you disagree with their policies and why you are closing your account
  - F. After you've closed it, make sure you follow up with the bank's management as well
  - G. If you are a credit card holder, it's always good to cut up your card and return it with a message as well.
  
2. **Sponsor a Greenwash**- A lot of these corporations are trying to green wash coal with tales of "Clean Coal" and Carbon, Capture and Storage (CCS). These are mostly public relations efforts promoting false solutions to coal and climate change. Both "Clean Coal" and CCS are untested technologies decades away from even knowing whether they will work or not.
  - A. Find a parking lot near a notorious green washer like a bank or coal company
  - B. Get your friends out in roller-skates and hot pants
  - C. Get a bucket of green water and start washing cars at the greenwash.
  
3. **Billionaires for Coal**— Imitation is one of the sincerest forms of flattery. Street theater is a really fun way to get your point across. So this form of street theater imitates the tycoons and heiress out to make a buck of the new black gold, i.e. coal.
  - A. Get some fancy clothes from your closet or local second hand store.
  - B. Make some top hats out of poster board and decorate them with "Coal Is King" or "Massey Makes Me \$\$\$"
  - C. Organize a fancy soiree' in front of your local coal company or bank branch and serve cocktails and toast King Coal
  - D. Start a pro-Billionaire singalong at your party.
  - E. Check <http://www.billionairesforbush.net/> for other ideas
  
4. **ATM Closings**-- Even if you can't pull a crowd together for a protest, a few people with "out of order" signs can shut down dozens of ATM machines owned by these banks in a matter of hours.
  - A. Get ATM signs here- [http://ran.org/campaigns/global\\_finance/resources/signs\\_banners\\_and\\_toolkits/](http://ran.org/campaigns/global_finance/resources/signs_banners_and_toolkits/)
  - B. Map out where your local Bank of America and Citi ATMs are
  - C. Pay a "visit" with signs and tape
  - D. Take a picture or video while you do it and send it to us
  
5. **Coal Dumps**—Corporations seem to like coal quite a bit. Why not return some it if to them?
  - A. Get a bag or wheelbarrow of coal
  - B. Get together a group of friends or a demonstration together
  - C. Go to a coal company or coal financier and "return" the coal on the steps or floor of their office.
  - D. For a more subtle ways, schedule an appointment with a financial advisor and deliver it gift-wrapped



- 6. Critical Mass-** Critical Mass is a time honored protest against car culture and an excellent way to get large crowds out for mass civil disobedience with relatively low risk.
- For a Critical Mass, all you have to do is get together a group of bikers and take to the streets.
  - The idea is to take over all lanes of traffic to create an empowering atmosphere for bicycles while temporarily impeding automobile traffic.
  - It helps to have a few people at the head of the ride leading the mob if you have a route you want to stick to.
- 7. Non-Violent Direct Action -** We recommend taking action directly to make your point or stop some sort of destruction. There are few more actions more empowering and attention grabbing than blocking access to a coal plant, coal mine or bank branch.
- This is something that takes quite a bit of planning and preparation. Don't engage in it lightly.
  - For more info or help on doing this, contact [dirtymoney@ran.org](mailto:dirtymoney@ran.org) or [students@sfo.greenpeace.org](mailto:students@sfo.greenpeace.org)
- 8. Alternative Advertising-** Unfurling a banner (for example, over a highway overpass, parking garage, or roof) is an easy action anyone can take with little effort. Banner drops when well timed will get the message out to tons of people, even though they rarely stay up for more than 30 minutes before being removed by security of some sort.
- Billboard Liberation** – the act of taking over a billboard and replacing the annoying advertisements with more important messages – can be an extremely effect way of getting attention to climate issues.
  - Balloon Banners** – for indoor banner hangs in offices or businesses with high ceilings a helium balloon banner can be up for quite some time and is easy to construct.
  - X marks the spot** – Take your banner hang to the source: hang it on a Coal Silo, smokestack, at coal importation port/train station, or an oil refinery and it's likely to get a ton of attention. The harder it is to get up, the harder it will be for them to get it down!
  - Wheatpasting-** Plastering posters through downtown and heavily trafficked areas is a good way to get your message out.
- 9. More Street Theater-** There are a lot of more street theater skits you can do.
- Tyvek Suit/Hazmat- Coal is so dirty that we need to protect ourselves. Go to King Coal's office and declare it a hazardous waste zone. Put on your tyvek suits, dust masks and goggles and begin putting up yellow caution tape.

- B. Cough-In- Get out your asthma inhalers and fake your own choking death. It's kind of dramatic but gets the point across.

Beach party for global warming- Get out your floaties and beach towels and throw a beach party on the steps of King Coal's offices



**10. Birddog Dirty Politicians and the CEOs that love them:** Birddogging is a classic tactic that involves showing up at a public event or a politician's office to ask them to support your cause. The coal industry has the support of politicians at all level of government, so it's important that they hear a strong anti-coal message from community members.

- Find a local, state, or federal politician who supports the coal industry. You should be able to find this on their website under their energy platform.
- Call her/his office to find out if they have any public events on November 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>. If they don't have an event, you can always drop by their office.
- Grab your friends, dress up in a clean energy costume, make banners, t-shirts, and signs, and show up to the event/office. Prep someone in your group to be the spokesperson to ask the politician to stop supporting dirty energy like coal, and instead support clean sources like solar and wind.
- For more help on how to set this up, contact [dirtymoney@ran.org](mailto:dirtymoney@ran.org) or [students@sfo.greenpeace.org](mailto:students@sfo.greenpeace.org).

### Friends and Allies

Our work can't go at this alone. We work with a network of radical environmental networks, student networks, Appalachian community groups, native community group and non-profits in this campaign against coal and coal finance. Over the past years, various groups have worked with us on a variety of actions and campaign activities. It's far from being just one group's campaign or movement.

Here are some of them.

- Rising Tide North America <http://www.risingtidenorthamerica.org>
- Mountain Justice Summer <http://www.mountainjusticesummer.org/>
- Earth First! <http://www.blueridgeef.org>
- Student Environmental Action Network (SEAC) <http://www.seac.org/>
- Southern Energy Network <http://climateaction.net/>
- Coal River Mountain watch <http://www.crmw.net/>
- Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition <http://www.ohvec.org/>
- Appalachian Voices <http://www.appvoices.org/>
- Co-Op America <http://www.coopamerica.org/>
- Sierra Club <http://www.sierraclub.org/environmentallaw/coal/>
- Black Mesa Water Coalition <http://www.blackmesawatercoalition.org/>
- Indigenous Environmental Network <http://www.ienearth.org/>



Right now there is a vibrant diverse decentralized multi-level multi-strategy **GLOBAL** movement around coal and an even bigger, more diverse and more decentralized one around global warming.

Taking on the coal companies, the coal plants and the coal financiers is one part of it. Keep the slogan “*Think Globally, Act Locally*” in mind when organizing your campaign.

Form your own group, collective or affinity group to start organizing in your own community.

We’re all *agents for change* against the fossil fuel empire and it begins at home.

WEBSITE: [www.dirtymoney.org](http://www.dirtymoney.org)

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