shipments were made from a mine near Saskatoon during 1959.

Potash reserves in Saskatchewan are extensive; they represent 50 per cent of known world reserves. Conservative estimates of recoverable potash, using present-day mining techniques, are in the region of 5.8 billion metric tonnes (6.4 billion tons) and actual reserves are probably much higher. At present production rates, Saskatchewan has sufficient potash to last at least 2,000 years.

The Potash Corporation is now concentraing on the expansion of its properties to meet the growing market for Saskatchewan potash. Phase one expansions are currently under way at the Cory and Rocanville Divisions. As well, a rehabilitation and expansion project at the Lanigan Division is scheduled for completion by 1980 and will increase production capacity to 915,000 tons at an estimated cost of $38.7 million. A second-phase expansion for Rocanville was also announced during the year. Expected to be finished in 1981, the expansion will increase capacity to 1,220,000 tons.

Coal

Lignite coal has been mined in southern Saskatchewan since the late 1800s. Lignite is an immature form of coal, having a higher ash content and a lower thermal value than other ranks of coal. About 1930, the era of strip mining began in Saskatchewan with the development of large draglines. In 1956, underground mining ceased as strip mining proved to be much more efficient. Production is now over 36.2 tonnes (50 tons) a man shift, compared with 4.5 tonnes (5 tons) a man shift from underground workings. Saskatchewan lignite has in the past been used for domestic heating, fuel for railway locomotives and fuel for industry. Today, the major market is the large capacity thermal power stations. It is envisaged that lignite may find other applications in the production of chemicals or of energy for the processing of local industrial minerals (potash, sodium sulphate). In 1978, coal production totalled 5 million tonnes (5.5 million tons). Of this total, the Saskatchewan Power Corporation consumed approximately 85 per cent for generation. Much interest is being shown in lignite in Saskatchewan by the provincial and federal governments and by large mineral companies.

Mineral and metals

Discovery of sodium sulphate in the alkaline lakes of southern Saskatchewan dates from 1821. Salt cake is a crude form of sodium sulphate, making up about 70 per cent of production. Most of this goes to the wood pulp industry, where it is used in a process to recover