

Mineral Industry Surveys

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ANTIMONY IN THE THIRD QUARTER 2009

Consumption of primary antimony in the third quarter of 2009 was estimated by the U.S. Geological Survey to be 26% lower than that in the second quarter of 2009 and 13% lower than that in the third quarter of 2008. During the first 8 months of 2009, antimony imports totaled 12,800 metric tons (t), compared with a total of 20,400 t for the comparable period of 2008. During the first 8 months of 2009, China was the leading supplier of antimony metal and antimony oxide to the United States.

Antimony prices rose slightly during the third quarter of 2009. The Platts Metals Week New York dealer price for antimony metal started the third quarter in the range of \$2.20 to \$2.25 per pound, and ended the third quarter in the range of \$2.55 to \$2.65 per pound.

U.S. Antimony Corp. (Thompson Falls, MT) announced in April further progress regarding its Mexican antimony operations. USAC received permits to construct and operate an antimony mill in Mexico after a 3-year wait. The site of the new mill in Queretaro, central Mexico, is close to USAC's existing Mexican antimony and silver properties and antimony smelter.

USAC intended to transport its prefabricated flotation mill from its base in Montana and assemble it in Mexico to begin an initial production of 150 metric tons per day of feed in early 2010. USAC anticipates that each metric ton of mill feed may contain 0.25 kilogram (kg) of silver and 17 kg of antimony. The mill site offers USAC the potential to increase the mill capacity

of antimony and antimony oxide several-fold in the future. USAC's main operation was in Thompson Falls, MT, where USAC mined antimony from 1969 to 1984. The processing part of USAC's Thompson Falls facility is capable of producing all major antimony products at rates exceeding 450 metric tons per month (Industrial Minerals, 2009).

Hunan Nonferrous Metals Corp. (HNC), an integrated metals producer in China, agreed to acquire a 100% equity interest in Beaver Brook Antimony Mine Inc. (Gander, Newfoundland, Canada), one of the relatively few operating antimony producers outside of China. The 550-metric-ton-per-day underground mine has an estimated lifespan of 10 years (American Metal Market, 2009).

Update

On December 23, 2009, the Platts Metals Week dealer price for antimony was \$2.85 to \$2.95 per pound.

References Cited

- American Metal Market, 2009, Hunan to buy Canada antimony mine: American Metal Market, v. 117, no. 36-1, p. 3.
Industrial Minerals, 2009, USAC to produce Mexico antimony: Industrial Minerals, September 23. (Accessed September 29, 2009, via <http://www.mineralnet.co.uk/>.)

TABLE 1
SALIENT ANTIMONY STATISTICS¹

(Metric tons, antimony content, unless otherwise specified)

	2008 ^p	2009			
		First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter	Year to date
Production:					
Primary smelter	--	--	--	--	--
Secondary	W	W	W	W	W
Imports for consumption:					
Ore and concentrate	164	29	24 ^r	44 ²	97
Metal	7,050	732 ^r	876 ^r	1,170 ²	2,780
Oxide ³	21,800	3,990	3,350 ^r	2,580 ²	9,910
Exports:					
Ore and concentrate	83	--	10	33 ²	43
Metal	1,290	185 ^r	220 ^r	141 ²	546
Oxide ³	2,950 ^r	429 ^r	812 ^r	220 ²	1,460
Consumption of primary antimony	8,150 ^r	1,740 ^r	2,230 ^r	1,650	5,620
Price, average, cents per pound ⁴	279.54	199.75	207.17	253.17	229.96
Stocks, end of period ⁵	944	1,340 ^r	1,390 ^r	1,390	XX

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data. XX Not applicable. -- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits, except prices.

²Data for July and August only; September data were not available at time of publication.

³Antimony content is calculated by the U.S. Geological Survey.

⁴Source: Platts Metals Week. New York dealer price for 99.5% to 99.6% metal, c.i.f. U.S. ports.

⁵Producer and consumer stocks.

TABLE 2
INDUSTRY STOCKS OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY
IN THE UNITED STATES

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class of material	2009 ¹		
	First quarter ^r	Second quarter ^r	Third quarter
Oxide	775	823	818
Other ²	568	570	572
Total	1,340	1,390	1,390

^rRevised.

¹Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents and respondents who held 42% of the total stocks of antimony at the end of 2008.

²Includes ore and concentrate, sulfide, and residues.

TABLE 3
CONSUMPTION OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY^{1,2}

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class of material consumed	2008 ^{r,p}	2009			
		First quarter ^r	Second quarter ^r	Third quarter	Year to date
Oxide	6,110	1,220	1,120	1,210	3,560
Other ³	2,040	518	1,100	441	2,060
Total	8,150	1,740	2,230	1,650	5,620

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents and respondents who consumed 29% of the total antimony in 2008.

³Includes ores and concentrates, metal, sulfide, and residues.

TABLE 4
CONSUMPTION OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY, BY CLASS OF MATERIAL PRODUCED¹

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Product	2008 ^p	2009				Year to date
		First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter	Year to date	
Metal ²	W	W	W	W	W	W
Nonmetal ³	W	W	W	W	W	W
Flame-retardants:						
Plastics	2,300	47	28	49	124	
Other ⁴	906	19	16	12	47	
Total	3,200	66	44	61	171	
Reported consumption	8,150 ^r	519	516 ^r	535	1,570	
Total consumption ⁵	XX	1,740 ^r	2,230 ^r	1,650	5,620	

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; included with "Reported consumption." XX Not applicable.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Includes adhesives, pigments, rubber, and textiles.

³Includes ammunition, antimonial lead, bearing metals and bearings, cable coverings, castings, sheet and pipe, and solder.

⁴Includes ammunition primers, pigments, ceramics and glass, and plastics.

⁵Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents and respondents who consumed 29% of the total antimony in 2008.

TABLE 5
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ANTIMONY, BY CLASS AND COUNTRY¹

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class and country	2008	2009					January-August ²
		First quarter ²	Second quarter ²	June	July	August	
Ore and concentrate:							
Bolivia	88	11	24	12	24	--	59
Other	76	19	--	--	--	20	39
Total	164	29	24	12	24	20	97
Metal:							
China	5,190	439	536	215	446	161	1,580
Mexico	865	114	161	33	232	237	744
Peru	433	110	84	32	18	--	212
Other	571	70	96	8	--	74	240
Total	7,050	732	876	288	696	472	2,780
Oxide: ³							
Belgium	1,590	166	414	137	179	122	881
China	12,100	2,370	1,840	747	951	787	5,940
Mexico	7,640	761	477	145	153	64	1,460
Other	462	696	617	289	155	164	1,630
Total	21,800	3,990	3,350	1,320	1,440	1,140	9,910
Grand total	29,000	4,750	4,240	1,620	2,160	1,630	12,800
Other antimony compounds (gross weight)	14	5	--	--	--	4	9

-- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²May include revisions to prior months data.

³Antimony content is calculated by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.