

Mineral Industry Surveys

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BISMUTH IN THE SECOND QUARTER 2010

Bismuth consumption in the United States for the second quarter of 2010 was estimated to be 295 metric tons (t), the same as that in the first quarter of 2010 and slightly lower than that in the second quarter of 2009. Bismuth imports in the second quarter of 2010 were 461 t nearly double imports in the comparable period of 2009. In the first half of 2010, China, Belgium, and the United Kingdom, in descending order, were the leading suppliers of bismuth to the United States.

The New York dealer price for bismuth, as published in Platts Metals Week, started April 2010 at \$8.50 to \$9.70 per pound and generally declined during the second quarter to finish June at \$8.25 to \$8.90 per pound.

MCP Group (Tilly, Belgium) announced it had signed a letter of intent with Fortune Minerals Ltd. (London, Ontario, Canada) to purchase bismuth from its NiCo mineral deposit in the Northwest Territories, Canada. Fortune Minerals planned to begin mining the deposit in late 2012, and it expected to produce about 2,000 metric tons per year (t/yr) of bismuth, along with substantial amounts of cobalt, copper, and gold. MCP is a leading world refiner of bismuth, and it has relied on China for much of its bismuth feedstock. Development of the NiCo deposit has been challenging because of the number of

regulatory issues along with indigenous tribe issues and infrastructure requirements. If the project does come to fruition, it would add a significant amount of bismuth to the world market, which is estimated to be about 10,000 t/yr (Ryan's Notes, 2010).

China's Minmetals Corp. (Beijing) announced plans to spend \$658 million to \$804 million in a 5-year period to explore for bismuth, rare earths, tin, and tungsten in southern Hunan Province. Minmetals signed a strategic cooperation deal with the Chenzhou City government in Hunan (American Metal Market, 2010).

Update

On July 8, 2010, the Platts Metals Week price for bismuth was \$7.80 to \$8.40 per pound.

References Cited

American Metal Market, 2010, Minmetals set to explore for rare earths, tin:
American Metal Market, v. 118, no. 20-4, May 20, p. 11.
Ryan's Notes, 2010, untitled: Ryan's Notes, March 1, v. 16, no. 8, p. 7.

TABLE 1
SALIENT BISMUTH STATISTICS¹

(Kilograms unless otherwise specified)

	2009				2010	
	Year ^p	Second quarter	Third quarter	Fourth quarter	First quarter	Second quarter
Consumption ²	1,180,000	302,000	298,000	293,000	295,000	295,000
Exports ³	397,000	60,200	90,800	136,000	166,000	183,000
Imports for consumption	1,250,000	238,000	372,000	455,000	454,000	461,000
Price per pound, dealer, average of period	\$7.84	\$7.43	\$7.08	\$8.53	\$7.94	\$9.17
Stocks, end of period, consumer	XX	143,000	135,000	134,000	134,000	133,000

^pPreliminary. XX Not applicable.

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

²Estimated, based on net imports.

³Comprises bismuth metal and the bismuth content of alloys and waste and scrap.

TABLE 2
ESTIMATED BISMUTH METAL CONSUMED
IN THE UNITED STATES, BY USE¹

(Kilograms)

Use	2009				2010	
	Year ^p	Second quarter	Third quarter	Fourth quarter	First quarter	Second quarter
Chemicals ²	704,000	176,000	176,000	176,000	176,000	176,000
Bismuth alloys	61,800	12,500	20,700	15,800	18,000	17,800
Metallurgical additives	415,000	113,000	100,000	100,000	101,000	101,000
Other	2,910	728	728	726	728	728
Total	1,180,000	302,000	298,000	293,000	295,000	295,000

^pPreliminary.

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

²Includes industrial and laboratory chemicals, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals.

TABLE 3
U.S. EXPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF BISMUTH METAL, BY COUNTRY¹

(Kilograms)

Country	2009			2010				
	Year	Third quarter	Fourth quarter	First quarter	April	May	June	January-June
Argentina	220	177	--	64	--	11	--	75
Austria	--	--	--	--	--	18,400	1,680	20,000
Belgium	56,600	19,300	18,300	14,800	--	--	--	14,800
Brazil	13,400	--	6,090	2,410	--	524	--	2,940
Canada	32,900	9,940	13,800	7,230	7,870	2,100	5,910	23,100
China	28,800	286	18,700	--	10,100	348	--	10,400
Colombia	1,230	--	--	118	--	205	--	323
Costa Rica	--	--	--	2,930	4,340	--	--	7,270
Czech Republic	99	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dominican Republic	6,550	5,120	--	--	--	--	--	--
France	121,000	35,700	41,500	54,800	31,500	31,400	3,690	121,000
Germany	2,420	695	1,560	36,900	26,400	--	--	63,300
Hong Kong	2,410	681	120	8,250	--	--	--	8,250
Japan	11,000	6,650	2,760	--	--	--	--	--
Mexico	59,300	7,540	13,000	30,500	1,620	4,800	7,310	44,200
Saudi Arabia	27	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Singapore	445	195	--	100	--	200	29	329
Thailand	8,590	1,100	3,270	7,630	439	2,110	756	10,900
United Kingdom	4,710	--	4,020	--	--	--	--	--
Vietnam	45,200	3,120	11,900	355	4,090	15,300	1,720	21,500
Other	1,790	243	738	235	62	--	33	330
Total	397,000	90,800	136,000	166,000	86,400	75,400	21,100	349,000

-- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF BISMUTH METAL, BY COUNTRY¹

(Kilograms)

Country	2009			2010				
	Year	Third quarter	Fourth quarter	First quarter	April	May	June	January-June
Belgium	450,000	101,000	158,000	175,000	94,900	43,100	62,600	376,000
Canada	5,740	1,900	592	9,930	5,360	1,090	--	16,400
China	554,000	163,000	231,000	252,000	78,000	78,900	89,900	499,000
Germany	1,600	1	1,300	370	3,230	--	--	3,600
Korea, Republic of	75,100	57,100	18,000	--	--	--	--	--
Mexico	59,400	39,400	20,000	--	--	--	--	--
Peru	29,400	6,280	--	--	--	--	--	--
United Kingdom	62,400	4,250	26,300	16,700	3,230	1	--	19,900
Other	13,300	--	4	100	499	--	113	712
Total	1,250,000	372,000	455,000	454,000	185,000	123,000	153,000	915,000

-- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.