

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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**For information, contact:**

James F. Carlin, Jr., Bismuth Commodity Specialist  
U.S. Geological Survey  
989 National Center  
Reston, VA 20192  
Telephone: (703) 648-4985, Fax: (703) 648-7757  
E-mail: jcarlin@usgs.gov

Raymond I. Eldridge III (Data)  
Telephone: (703) 648-7982  
Fax: (703) 648-7975  
E-mail: reldridge@usgs.gov

**Internet:** <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals>

## BISMUTH IN THE FOURTH QUARTER 2012

Bismuth consumption in the United States for the fourth quarter of 2012 was estimated to be 156 metric tons (t), slightly lower than that in the third quarter of 2012. Bismuth imports for 2012 were 1,700 t, a decline of 3% from those in 2011. China, Belgium, the United Kingdom, and the Republic of Korea, in decreasing order, were the leading suppliers of bismuth to the United States in 2012.

The New York dealer price range for bismuth, published in Platts Metals Week, started October 2012 at \$9.00 to \$9.75 per pound and declined during the fourth quarter to finish December at \$8.40 to \$8.90 per pound.

Hunan Jinwang Bismuth Industry Co., Ltd. (Chenzhou City, Hunan Province, China) opened a new multi-metal production plant in Xianxi, at a cost of \$79 million. The facility has production capacities of 4,000 metric tons per year (t/yr) of high-grade bismuth, 260 t/yr of silver, 200 t/yr of tellurium, and 10 t/yr of gold. Jinwang, founded in 2001, has been a leading company in China's bismuth industry. With the opening of the

new plant, Jinwang officials declared the firm to be the world's leading bismuth producer (Chao, 2012).

Henan Jinhong Company Ltd. (Henan Province, China) commissioned a production line for antimony trioxide and bismuth metal. The new facility will enable the company to produce 1,500 t/yr of antimony trioxide and 360 t/yr of bismuth metal (Metal-Pages Ltd., 2012).

### Update

On March 14, 2013, the Platts Metals Week price range for bismuth was \$8.80 to \$9.20 per pound.

### Reference Cited

Chao, Mikaela, 2012, China—Jinwang opened bismuth plant on November 26: London, United Kingdom, Metal-Pages Ltd., December 7. (Accessed February 12, 2012, via [metal-pages.com/](http://metal-pages.com/))  
Metal-Pages Ltd., 2012, China—Henan Jinhong commissions antimony/bismuth production line: London, United Kingdom, Metal-Pages Ltd., September 14. (Accessed December 18, 2012, via [metal-pages.com/](http://metal-pages.com/))

TABLE 1  
SALIENT BISMUTH STATISTICS<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons)

	2012					
	2011	1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter– 4th quarter
Consumption <sup>2</sup>	715	168	159	159	156	642
Exports <sup>3</sup>	1,030	224	218	161	160	764
Imports for consumption	1,750	477	380	387	455	1,700
Price per pound, dealer, average of period	\$11.47	\$10.67	\$10.65	\$10.04	\$9.12	\$10.10
Stocks, end of period, consumer	138	135	135	134	134	134

<sup>1</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; except prices.

<sup>2</sup>Estimated.

<sup>3</sup>Comprises bismuth metal and the bismuth content of alloys and waste and scrap.

TABLE 2  
ESTIMATED BISMUTH METAL CONSUMED IN THE UNITED STATES, BY USE<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons)

Use	2012					
	2011	1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter– 4th quarter
Chemicals <sup>2</sup>	W	W	W	W	W	W
Bismuth alloys	60	18	16	16	14	64
Metallurgical additives	222	W	W	W	W	W
Other	W	1	1	1	1	4
Total	715	168	159	159	156	642

W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; included in "Total."

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

<sup>2</sup>Includes industrial and laboratory chemicals, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals.

TABLE 3  
U.S. EXPORTS OF BISMUTH METAL, BY COUNTRY<sup>1</sup>

(Kilograms)

Country	2012							1st quarter– 4th quarter
	2011	1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	October	November	December	
Belgium	--	56,100	--	93	--	--	--	93
Brazil	12,200	--	--	231	--	50	2,070	2,350
Canada	20,700	17,400	31,400	11,500	3,680	7,700	243	72,000
China	28,000	1,840	15,100	19,300	--	--	--	36,200
France	44,100	2,610	--	--	--	--	--	2,610
Germany	9,320	294	--	1,490	--	1,410	--	3,270
Hong Kong	1,490	6,800	9,450	6,080	4,030	3,340	2,420	32,100
Mexico	219,000	53,800	39,600	29,700	7,520	20,700	7,380	159,000
Thailand	10,900	634	696	3,120	3,080	1,400	--	8,930
Vietnam	621,000	73,300	117,000	77,000	47,500	5,020	31,000	351,000
Other	67,600	11,500	4,930	13,000	1,100	5,340	5,340	97,200
Total	1,030,000	224,000	218,000	161,000	66,900	45,000	48,500	764,000

-- Zero.

<sup>1</sup>Data 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 COUNTRY<sup>1</sup>

(Kilograms)

Country	2012							1st quarter– 4th quarter
	2011	1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	October	November	December	
Belgium	713,000	197,000	152,000	101,000	25,900	--	27,800	505,000
Canada	11,600	3,850	2,520	3,330	961	--	784	11,400
China	974,000	264,000	217,000	256,000	162,000	110,000	64,800	1,070,000
Germany	824	100	--	100	--	--	--	200
Korea, Republic of	26,700	5,010	--	--	--	40,000	--	45,000
United Kingdom	22,700	6,560	8,620	25,900	2,350	17,800	2,590	63,800
Other	200	166	--	38	--	13	38	255
Total	1,750,000	477,000	380,000	387,000	191,000	168,000	96,000	1,700,000

-- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.