

TELLURIUM

(Data in metric tons of tellurium content, unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: Tellurium and tellurium dioxide of commercial grades were recovered in the United States at one copper refinery, principally from anode slimes, but also from lead refinery skimmings. High-purity tellurium, tellurium master alloys, and tellurium compounds were produced by primary and intermediate processors from commercial-grade metal and tellurium dioxide. Tellurium was used mainly in the production of free-machining steels. It was used as a minor additive in copper and lead alloys and malleable cast iron, as an accelerator in rubber compounding, in thermoelectric applications, and as a semiconductor in thermal-imaging and photoelectric applications. Tellurium was added to selenium-base photoreceptor alloys to increase the photo speed. In 1998, the estimated distribution of uses, worldwide, was as follows: iron and steel products, 50%; catalysts and chemicals, 25%; additives to nonferrous alloys, 10%; photoreceptors and thermoelectric devices, 8%; and other uses, 7%.

Salient Statistics—United States:	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998^e
Production, refinery	W	W	W	W	W
Imports for consumption, unwrought, waste and scrap ¹	27	46	74	64	72
Exports	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Consumption, apparent	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Price, dollars per pound, 99.7% minimum ²	26	23	21	19	18
Stocks, producer, refined, yearend	W	W	W	W	W
Employment, number	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Net import reliance ³ as a percent of apparent consumption	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Recycling: There was no domestic secondary production of tellurium. However, some tellurium may have been recovered abroad from selenium-base photoreceptor scrap exported for recycling.

Import Sources (1994-97): United Kingdom, 31%; Canada, 16%; Philippines, 14%; Peru, 12%; and other, 27%.

Tariff: Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations (NTR)	Non-NTR⁴
		12/31/98	12/31/98
Metal	2804.50.0000	Free	25.0% ad val.

Depletion Allowance: 14% (Domestic), 14% (Foreign).

Government Stockpile: None.

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Events, Trends, and Issues: Domestic and world tellurium demand remained about the same in 1998 as they were in 1997. World production also remained steady, resulting in little change in the oversupply. Detailed information on the world tellurium market was not available.

The most promising new application that would significantly affect tellurium demand is in Remote Area Power Supplies, mainly in developing countries, where the largest percentage increases in power consumption will occur in the next century. Cadmium telluride is one of the most promising thin-film photovoltaic (PV) module compounds for power generation, achieving some of the highest power conversion ratios yet obtained.

World Refinery Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:

	Refinery production		Reserves⁵	Reserve base⁵
	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998^e</u>		
United States	W	W	3,000	6,000
Canada	40	40	700	1,500
Japan	24	25	—	—
Peru	25	25	500	1,600
Other countries ⁶	<u>NA</u>	<u>NA</u>	<u>16,000</u>	<u>29,000</u>
World total (may be rounded)	<u>⁷89</u>	<u>⁷90</u>	20,000	38,000

World Resources: The figures shown for reserves and reserve base include only tellurium contained in economic copper deposits. In addition, significant quantities of tellurium are contained in economic gold and lead deposits, but currently none is recovered. Deposits of coal, copper, and other metals that are undeveloped or of subeconomic grade contain several times the amount of tellurium contained in identified economic copper deposits. However, it is unlikely that tellurium contained in these deposits can be recovered economically.

Substitutes: The chief substitutes for tellurium are selenium, bismuth, and lead in metallurgical applications; selenium and sulfur in rubber compound applications; and selenium, germanium, and organic compounds in electronic applications.

^eEstimated. NA Not available. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

¹Imports of boron and tellurium are grouped together under the Harmonized Tariff Schedule; however, imports of boron are thought to be small relative to tellurium.

²Yearend prices quoted by the sole producer.

³Defined as imports - exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.

⁴See Appendix B.

⁵See Appendix D for definitions. Estimates include tellurium contained in copper resources only.

⁶In addition to the countries listed, Australia, Belgium, China, France, Germany, Kazakhstan, the Philippines, Russia, and the United Kingdom produce refined tellurium, but output is not reported, and available information is inadequate for formulation of reliable production estimates.

⁷Excludes refinery production from the United States and "Other countries."