

## PUMICE AND PUMICITE

(Data in thousand metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

**Domestic Production and Use:** The estimated value of pumice and pumicite sold or used in 1997 was \$14.1 million. Domestic output came from 14 producers in 6 States. The principal producing States were New Mexico and Oregon, with combined production accounting for about 64% of the national total. The remaining production was from Arizona, California, Idaho, and Kansas. About 50% of the pumice was consumed for building blocks and the remainder was used in abrasives, concrete, laundries, and many other uses.

| <b><u>Salient Statistics—United States:</u></b>                          | <b><u>1993</u></b> | <b><u>1994</u></b> | <b><u>1995</u></b> | <b><u>1996</u></b> | <b><u>1997<sup>e</sup></u></b> |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Production, mine <sup>1</sup>  | 469                | 490                | 529                | 612                | 538                            |
| Imports for consumption  | 143                | 143                | 238                | 215                | 155                            |
| Exports <sup>e</sup>   | 18                 | 18                 | 16                 | 13                 | 13                             |
| Consumption, apparent  | 594                | 615                | 751                | 814                | 680                            |
| Price, average value, dollars per ton, f.o.b.<br>mine or mill            | 25.68              | 24.08              | 24.99              | 24.19              | 26.29                          |
| Stocks, yearend  | NA                 | NA                 | NA                 | NA                 | NA                             |
| Employment, mine and mill, number  | 50                 | 50                 | 60                 | 70                 | 70                             |
| Net import reliance <sup>2</sup> as a percent of<br>apparent consumption | 21                 | 20                 | 30                 | 25                 | 21                             |

**Recycling:** Not available.

**Import Sources (1993-96):** Greece, 87%; Turkey, 6%; Ecuador, 6%; and other, 1%.

| <b><u>Tariff: Item</u></b>                                | <b><u>Number</u></b> | <b><u>Most favored nation (MFN)</u></b><br><b><u>12/31/97</u></b> | <b><u>Non-MFN<sup>3</sup></u></b><br><b><u>12/31/97</u></b> |
|---|----------------------|---|---|
| Crude or in irregular pieces,<br>including crushed pumice | 2513.11.0000         | Free  | Free.   |
| Other   | 2513.19.0000         | 0.1¢/kg   | 1.7¢/kg.  |

**Depletion Allowance:** 5% (Domestic), 5% (Foreign).

**Government Stockpile:** None.

## PUMICE AND PUMICITE

**Events, Trends, and Issues:** The apparent consumption of 680,000 tons in 1997 was 16% less than 1996's apparent consumption. The decrease in consumption was attributed to decreased demand for construction uses, including building block, and laundry uses.

It is estimated that in 1998 domestic mine production of pumice and pumicite will be about 550,000 tons, with U.S. apparent consumption at approximately 750,000 tons. Imports, mainly from Greece, continue to maintain markets on the East Coast and Gulf Coast States of the United States.

Although pumice and pumicite were plentiful in the Western United States, changes in laws and public land designations could make many deposits decreasingly accessible to mining. Pumice and pumicite were sensitive to mining cost and should domestic production cost increase, it was expected that imports and competing materials might replace domestic pumice in many markets.

All domestic mining of pumice in 1997 was by open pit methods and generally occurred in relatively remote areas where land use conflicts were not severe. Although the generation and disposal of reject fines in mining and milling resulted in a dust problem at some operations, the environmental impact was restricted to a small geographical area.

### World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:

|                            | Mine production |                         | Reserves <sup>4</sup> | Reserve base <sup>4</sup> |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
|                            | <u>1996</u>     | <u>1997<sup>e</sup></u> |                       |                           |
| United States <sup>1</sup> | 612             | 538                     | Large                 | Large                     |
| Chile                      | 450             | 450                     | NA                    | NA                        |
| France                     | 450             | 475                     | NA                    | NA                        |
| Germany                    | 600             | 550                     | NA                    | NA                        |
| Greece                     | 1,200           | 1,200                   | NA                    | NA                        |
| Italy                      | 4,600           | 4,500                   | NA                    | NA                        |
| Spain                      | 600             | 600                     | NA                    | NA                        |
| Turkey                     | 1,000           | 1,000                   | NA                    | NA                        |
| Other countries            | <u>1,600</u>    | <u>2,000</u>            | <u>NA</u>             | <u>NA</u>                 |
| World total (rounded)      | 11,100          | 11,300                  | NA                    | NA                        |

**World Resources:** The identified U.S. domestic resources of pumice and pumicite in the West are estimated to be at least 25 million tons. The estimated resources in the Western and Great Plains States are 250 million to 450 million tons.

**Substitutes:** Transportation cost determines the maximum distance that pumice and pumicite can be shipped and remain competitive with alternate materials. Competitive materials that can be substituted for pumice and pumicite for several end uses include expanded shale and clay, diatomite, and crushed aggregates.

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Quantity sold and used by producers.

<sup>2</sup>Defined as imports - exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.

<sup>3</sup>See Appendix B.

<sup>4</sup>See Appendix D for definitions.