

## 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 1999 was \$13.7 million. Domestic output came from 14 producers in 6 States. The principal producing States were California, New Mexico, and Oregon, with combined production accounting for about 82% of the national total. The remaining production was from Arizona, Idaho, and Kansas. About 64% of the pumice was consumed for building blocks, and the remaining 36% was used in abrasives, concrete, stone-washing laundries, and other applications.

<b>Salient Statistics—United States:</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999<sup>e</sup></b>
Production, mine <sup>1</sup>	529	612	577	583	617
Imports for consumption	238	215	265	286	350
Exports <sup>e</sup>	16	13	12	22	20
Consumption, apparent	728	814	830	847	947
Price, average value, dollars per ton, f.o.b. mine or mill	25.00	24.20	27.90	21.90	22.18
Stocks, yearend	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment, mine and mill, number	60	70	70	75	75
Net import reliance <sup>2</sup> as a percent of apparent consumption	30	25	30	31	35

**Recycling:** Not available.

**Import Sources (1995-98):** Greece, 88%; Turkey, 5%; Ecuador, 3%; Italy, 3%; and other, 1%.

<b>Tariff: Item</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Normal Trade Relations 12/31/99</b>
Crude or in irregular pieces, including crushed pumice	2513.11.0000	Free.
Other	2513.19.0000	Free.

**Depletion Allowance:** 5% (Domestic and foreign).

**Government Stockpile:** None.

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**Events, Trends, and Issues:** The amount of pumice and pumicite sold or used in 1999 was essentially unchanged when compared with that of 1998. Imports increased over 14% compared with that of 1998 as more Greek pumice was brought into the eastern half of the United States. Total consumption reached an 11-year high, at 947,000 tons. Consumption increased because of increased demand from lightweight-block and -concrete producers. Stone-washing laundry use of pumice continued to decline in 1999.

It is estimated that in 2000 domestic mine production of pumice and pumicite will be about 650,000 tons, with U.S. apparent consumption at approximately 975,000 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 costs 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 1999 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>3</sup>	Reserve base <sup>3</sup>
	1998	1999 <sup>e</sup>		
United States <sup>1</sup>	583	617	Large	Large
Chile	480	480	NA	NA
France	480	500	NA	NA
Germany	600	600	NA	NA
Greece	1,650	1,700	NA	NA
Italy	5,100	5,100	NA	NA
Spain	600	600	NA	NA
Turkey	800	800	NA	NA
Other countries	1,170	1,200	NA	NA
World total (rounded)	11,500	11,600	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 C for definitions.