

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 2002 was about \$23 million. Domestic output came from 16 producers in 6 States. Pumice and pumicite was mined in Arizona, California, Idaho, Kansas, New Mexico, and Oregon. Just over 65% of production came from Arizona and Oregon. About 56% of the pumice was consumed for building blocks, and the remaining 44% was used in abrasives, concrete, horticulture, landscaping, stone-washing laundries, and other applications.

Salient Statistics—United States:	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002^e
Production, mine ¹	870	1,000	1,050	920	950
Imports for consumption	288	354	385	379	400
Exports ^e	22	23	27	27	30
Consumption, apparent	1,140	1,330	1,410	1,270	1,320
Price, average value, dollars per ton, f.o.b. mine or mill	21.59	27.69	24.27	29.19	24.00
Stocks, yearend	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment, mine and mill, number	95	105	105	100	100
Net import reliance ² as a percentage of apparent consumption	23	25	25	28	28

Recycling: Not available.

Import Sources (1998-2001): Greece, 81%; Italy, 13%; Turkey, 5%; and other, 1%.

Tariff: Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations 12/31/02
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: A large integrated pumice and block producing company that was not included in previous years was added for this preliminary survey. Previous years' production, consumption, and net import reliance were revised to include this operation. The amount of domestically produced pumice and pumicite sold or used in 2002 increased 3.2%. Imports increased about 5.5% compared with those of 2001 as more Greek and Italian pumice was brought into the eastern half of the United States. Total apparent consumption in 2002 rose about 3.9% compared with that of 2001. Stone-washing laundry use of pumice continued to decline in 2002.

In 2003, domestic mine production of pumice and pumicite is expected to be about 1 million tons, with U.S. apparent consumption at approximately 1.35 million tons. Imports, mainly from Greece, will continue to supply markets primarily in the U.S. East Coast and Gulf Coast States.

Although pumice and pumicite are plentiful in the Western United States, changes in laws and public land designations could decrease access to many deposits. Pumice and pumicite are sensitive to mining costs, and, if domestic production costs were to increase, imports and competing materials might replace pumice in many domestic markets.

All domestic mining of pumice in 2002 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 geographic area.

World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:

	Mine production		Reserves ³	Reserve base ³
	2001	2002 ^e		
United States ¹	920	950	Large	Large
Chile	800	750	NA	NA
Ecuador	350	270	NA	NA
France	450	450	NA	NA
Germany	500	500	NA	NA
Greece	1,600	1,600	NA	NA
Guadeloupe	210	210	NA	NA
Guatemala	420	420	NA	NA
Italy	4,600	4,600	NA	NA
New Zealand	500	500	NA	NA
Spain	600	600	NA	NA
Turkey	800	600	NA	NA
Other countries	<u>1,050</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>NA</u>	<u>NA</u>
World total (rounded)	12,800	12,500	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 total resources (identified and undiscovered) 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 crushed aggregates, diatomite, and expanded shale and clay.

^eEstimated. NA Not available.

¹Quantity sold and used by producers.

²Defined as imports - exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.

³See Appendix C for definitions.