

MICA (NATURAL), SCRAP AND FLAKE¹

(Data in thousand metric tons unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: Scrap and flake mica production, excluding low-quality sericite, was estimated to be 71,800 tons in 2007. North Carolina accounted for about 40% of U.S. production. The remaining output came from Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, and South Dakota. Scrap mica was recovered principally from mica and sericite schist and as a byproduct from feldspar, kaolin, and industrial sand beneficiation. The majority of domestic production was processed into small particle-size mica by either wet or dry grinding. Primary uses were joint compound, oil-well-drilling additives, paint, roofing, and rubber products. The value of 2007 scrap mica production was estimated to be \$8 million. Ground mica sales in 2006 were valued at about \$49 million and were expected to decline in value in 2007. There were eight domestic producers of scrap and flake mica.

Salient Statistics—United States:	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007^e
Production: ^{2,3}					
Mine	79	99	78	110	72
Ground	94	98	120	123	110
Imports, mica powder and mica waste	35	42	36	45	41
Exports, mica powder and mica waste	10	10	9	7	8
Consumption, apparent ⁴	103	132	105	148	106
Price, average, dollars per metric ton, reported:					
Scrap and flake	213	155	248	204	112
Ground:					
Wet	938	NA	776	784	780
Dry	205	269	226	237	230
Stocks, producer, yearend	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment, mine, number ⁵	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Net import reliance ⁶ as a percentage of apparent consumption	24	25	26	26	32

Recycling: None.

Import Sources (2003-06): Canada, 38%; China, 28%; India, 23%; Finland, 6%; and other, 5%.

Tariff: Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations 12-31-07
Mica powder	2525.20.0000	Free.
Mica waste	2525.30.0000	Free.

Depletion Allowance: 22% (Domestic), 14% (Foreign).

Government Stockpile: None.

MICA (NATURAL), SCRAP AND FLAKE

Events, Trends, and Issues: Domestic production of ground mica decreased in 2007. The decrease primarily resulted from lower production in Alabama and North Carolina, but also included South Carolina, while production in Georgia and South Dakota increased. Canada remained the main source of imported phlogopite mica for the United States. Canada and China were the leading sources of imported mica powder, and India and Canada were the principal sources of mica waste. India and China were the major sources of imported crude and rifted mica valued at under \$1.00 per kilogram. The United States, Russia, and Finland were major world producers of scrap and flake mica in 2007. Imported mica scrap and flake is primarily used for making mica paper and as a filler and reinforcer in plastics.

World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:

	Mine production		Reserves ⁷	Reserve base ⁷
	2006	2007 ^e		
United States ²	110	72	Large	Large
Brazil	4	4	Large	Large
Canada	18	18	Large	Large
Finland	71	70	Large	Large
France	10	10	Large	Large
India	4	4	Large	Large
Korea, Republic of	37	40	Large	Large
Norway	26	25	Large	Large
Russia	100	100	Large	Large
Other countries	33	15	Large	Large
World total (rounded)	410	360	Large	Large

World Resources: Resources of scrap and flake mica are available in granite, pegmatite, schist, and clay deposits and are considered more than adequate to meet anticipated world demand in the foreseeable future.

Substitutes: Some of the lightweight aggregates, such as diatomite, perlite, and vermiculite, may be substituted for ground mica when used as a filler. Ground synthetic fluorophlogopite, a fluorine-rich mica, may replace natural ground mica for uses that require the thermal and electrical properties of mica.

^eEstimated. NA Not available.

¹See also Mica (Natural), Sheet.

²Sold or used by producing companies.

³Excludes low-quality sericite used primarily for brick manufacturing.

⁴Based on ground mica.

⁵Total employment at mines and mills where mica was produced and processed, excluding feldspar companies with byproduct production. Employees were not assigned to specific commodities in calculating employment.

⁶Defined as imports – exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.

⁷See Appendix C for definitions.