

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 98,700 tons in 2008. North Carolina accounted for about 37% 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 2008 scrap mica production was estimated to be \$14 million. Ground mica sales in 2007 were valued at about \$50 million and were expected to increase in value in 2008. There were 10 domestic producers of scrap and flake mica.

<u>Salient Statistics—United States:</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008^e</u>
Production: ^{2,3}					
Mine	99	78	110	97	99
Ground	98	120	123	85	104
Imports, mica powder and mica waste	42	36	45	41	29
Exports, mica powder and mica waste	10	9	7	8	9
Consumption, apparent ⁴	132	105	148	130	118
Price, average, dollars per metric ton, reported:					
Scrap and flake	155	248	204	149	213
Ground:					
Wet	NA	776	784	794	790
Dry	269	226	237	246	240
Stocks, producer, yearend	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment, mine, number	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Net import reliance ⁵ as a percentage of apparent consumption	25	26	26	26	16

Recycling: None.

Import Sources (2004-07): Canada, 34%; China, 31%; India, 26%; Finland, 5%; and other, 4%.

<u>Tariff:</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Normal Trade Relations</u>
			<u>12-31-08</u>
	Mica powder	2525.20.0000	Free.
	Mica waste	2525.30.0000	Free.

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

Government Stockpile: None.

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Events, Trends, and Issues: Domestic production of ground mica increased in 2008, based on data through August. The increase primarily resulted from the restart of mica production in Alabama and stable mine production in the other producing States. 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, China, and Finland were the major sources of imported crude and rifted mica valued at under \$1.00 per kilogram. Finland, Russia, and the United States were major world producers of scrap and flake mica in 2008. 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 ⁶	Reserve base ⁶
	2007	2008 ^e		
United States ²	97	99	Large	Large
Brazil	4	4	Large	Large
Canada	18	18	Large	Large
Finland	68	70	Large	Large
France	20	20	Large	Large
India	4	4	Large	Large
Korea, Republic of	37	37	Large	Large
Norway	3	3	Large	Large
Russia	100	100	Large	Large
Other countries	32	30	Large	Large
World total (rounded)	380	390	Large	Large

World Resources: Resources of scrap and flake mica are available in clay deposits, granite, pegmatite, and schist, 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 scrap and flake mica production.

⁵Defined as imports – exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.

⁶[See Appendix C for definitions.](#)