

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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## ANTIMONY IN THE FIRST QUARTER 2008

Consumption of primary antimony in the first quarter of 2008 was estimated by the U.S. Geological Survey to be 30% higher than that in the fourth quarter of 2007 and 15% higher than that in the first quarter of 2007. During the first 2 months of 2008, antimony imports totaled 4,780 metric tons (t) compared with a total of 4,420 t for the comparable period of 2007. During the first 2 months of 2008, China was the leading supplier of antimony metal and antimony oxide to the United States.

Antimony prices remained fairly steady during the first quarter of 2008. The Platts Metals Week New York dealer price for antimony metal started the first quarter in the range of \$2.64 to \$2.69 per pound and finished the first quarter at \$2.60 to \$2.70 per pound.

Events in China, the world's leading antimony producer, continued to limit antimony supplies. Chinese producers struggled with transportation problems and government

crackdowns, which included restrictions on the availability of detonators used to mine antimony ore. Rivers in southern China have been dry following droughts in March, impeding the transportation of material. Chinese authorities have attempted to implement measures to reduce pollution in advance of the Olympic games, which has led to reduced antimony production at some facilities (American Metal Market, 2008).

### Update

On June 5, 2008, the Platts Metals Week price for antimony was \$2.96 to \$3.03 per pound.

### Reference Cited

American Metal Market, 2008, Antimony tops \$6,000 mark on Chinese supply worries: American Metal Market, v. 116, no. 16-1, April 21, p. 9.

TABLE 1  
SALIENT ANTIMONY STATISTICS<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons, antimony content, unless otherwise specified)

	2007		2008
	Year <sup>p</sup>	Fourth quarter	First quarter
<b>Production:</b>			
Primary smelter	--	--	--
Secondary	W	W	W
Imports for consumption:	27,800	6,880 <sup>r</sup>	4,780 <sup>2</sup>
Ore and concentrate	226	34 <sup>r</sup>	31 <sup>2</sup>
Metal	5,920	1,280 <sup>r</sup>	1,240 <sup>2</sup>
Oxide <sup>3</sup>	21,700	5,560 <sup>r</sup>	3,510 <sup>2</sup>
Exports:	3,900	921 <sup>r</sup>	504 <sup>2</sup>
Metal, alloys, and scrap (gross weight)	725	230 <sup>r</sup>	120 <sup>2</sup>
Oxide <sup>3</sup>	3,170	691 <sup>r</sup>	384 <sup>2</sup>
Consumption of primary antimony	9,060	2,000 <sup>r</sup>	2,590
Price: Average cents per pound <sup>4</sup>	257.25	263.67	266.87
Stocks, end of period <sup>5</sup>	XX	2,040 <sup>r</sup>	2,090

<sup>r</sup>Revised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data. XX Not applicable. -- Zero.

<sup>1</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits, except prices.

<sup>2</sup>Data for January and February only; March data were not available at time of publication.

<sup>3</sup>Antimony content is calculated by the U.S. Geological Survey.

<sup>4</sup>Source: Platts Metals Week. New York dealer price for 99.5% to 99.6% metal, c.i.f. U.S. ports.

<sup>5</sup>Producer and consumer stocks.

TABLE 2  
INDUSTRY STOCKS OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY  
IN THE UNITED STATES<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class of material	2007 <sup>2</sup>	2008 <sup>2</sup>
	Fourth quarter	First quarter
Oxide	1,590 <sup>r</sup>	1,610
Other <sup>3</sup>	454	484
Total	2,040 <sup>r</sup>	2,090

<sup>r</sup>Revised.

<sup>1</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

<sup>2</sup>Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents and respondents who held 48% of the total stocks of antimony at the end of 2006.

<sup>3</sup>Includes ore and concentrate, sulfide, and residues.

TABLE 3  
CONSUMPTION OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY<sup>1,2</sup>

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class of material consumed	2007		2008
	Year <sup>p</sup>	Fourth quarter	First quarter
Oxide	7,720	1,800 <sup>r</sup>	2,200
Other <sup>3</sup>	1,340	203	395
Total	9,060	2,000 <sup>r</sup>	2,590

<sup>p</sup>Preliminary. <sup>r</sup>Revised.

<sup>1</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

<sup>2</sup>Estimated 100% coverage based quarterly respondents and respondents who consumed 72% of the total antimony in 2006.

<sup>3</sup>Includes ores and concentrates, metal, sulfide, and residues.

TABLE 4  
CONSUMPTION OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY, BY CLASS OF MATERIAL  
PRODUCED<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Product	2007		2008
	Year <sup>p</sup>	Fourth quarter	First quarter
Metal <sup>2</sup>	W	W	W
Nonmetal <sup>3</sup>	W	W	W
Flame-retardants:			
Plastics	470	69 <sup>r</sup>	44
Other <sup>4</sup>	388	104	196
Total	859	173 <sup>r</sup>	240
Reported consumption	2,530	535 <sup>r</sup>	729
Total consumption <sup>5</sup>	9,060	2,000 <sup>r</sup>	2,590

<sup>p</sup>Preliminary. <sup>r</sup>Revised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; included with "Reported consumption." XX Not applicable.

<sup>1</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

<sup>2</sup>Includes adhesives, pigments, rubber, and textiles.

<sup>3</sup>Includes ammunition, antimonial lead, bearing metals and bearings, cable coverings, castings, sheet and pipe, and solder.

<sup>4</sup>Includes ammunition primers, pigments, ceramics and glass, and plastics.

<sup>5</sup>Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents and respondents who consumed 72% of the total antimony in 2006.

TABLE 5  
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ANTIMONY, BY CLASS AND COUNTRY<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class and country	2007			2008		
	Year <sup>p,2</sup>	December	Fourth quarter <sup>2</sup>	January	February	January-February
Ore and concentrate:						
Bolivia	139	--	23	11	--	11
Other	87	--	11	20	--	20
Total	226	--	34	31	--	31
Metal:						
China	3,770	237	1,060	395	582	977
Mexico	648	10	55	36	107	143
Peru	419	18	108	18	57	75
Other	1,080	--	62	--	42	42
Total	5,920	265	1,280	450	787	1,240
Oxide: <sup>3</sup>						
Belgium	1,700	131	394	155	265	420
China	11,600	1,080	3,320	720	1,120	1,840
Mexico	7,970	479	1,770	543	631	1,180
Other	349	17	77	26	45	70
Total	21,700	1,700	5,560	1,440	2,060	3,510
Grand total	27,800	1,970	6,880	1,930	2,850	4,780
Other antimony compounds (gross weight)	24	--	--	--	--	--

<sup>p</sup>Preliminary. -- Zero.

<sup>1</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

<sup>2</sup>May include revisions to prior months data.

<sup>3</sup>Antimony content is calculated by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.