

Mineral Industry Surveys

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ANTIMONY IN THE THIRD QUARTER 2008

Consumption of primary antimony in the third quarter of 2008 was estimated by the U.S. Geological Survey to be 10% lower than that in the second quarter of 2008 and 4% lower than that in the third quarter of 2007. Imports of antimony products in the first 8 months of 2008 were 10% higher than those in the comparable period of 2007.

Antimony prices generally remained in a narrow range in the third quarter of 2008. The antimony price was \$2.93 per pound at the beginning of July and was \$3.05 per pound at the end of September. The average price of antimony in the third quarter of 2008 was \$2.98 per pound, compared with \$2.84 per pound in the second quarter of 2008, and \$2.57 in the third quarter of 2007.

In China, reports indicated that the Government shut down several antimony mines and smelters in Hunan Province because of high levels of arsenic in rivers, causing prices to rise because of product shortage. China's antimony metal exports rose 30% in the first 8 months of 2008 to 6,700 metric tons (t), compared with those of the same period of 2007 (Ryan's Notes, 2008). Also in China, the Ministry of Commerce announced a reduction of export quotas for antimony in 2009. The new export quota for antimony is 58,700 t, 2% less than the level in 2008 (American Metal Market, 2008).

In Canada, VVC Exploration Corp. (Toronto, Ontario) announced that its partly owned Beaver Brook antimony mine was restarted in May. The mine is in central Newfoundland about 60 kilometers southwest of Gander. Roycefield Resources

Ltd. (Moncton, New Brunswick) had operated the mine in 1997, but closed it in 1998 owing to declining antimony prices. The stibnite ore was expected to be mined underground using the overhead cut and fill method, with development waste and quarried rock used as a backfill. The ore would be fed to a 450-metric-ton-per-day mill that uses flotation to produce a concentrate grading about 62% stibnite. The stibnite concentrate was to be trucked to Halifax, Nova Scotia, for shipping to international markets. The mine has a workforce of about 100 people. The expected life of the mine is 10 years (CNW Group 2008; Metal-Pages, 2008).

Update

On November 26, 2008, the Platts Metals Week price for antimony was \$2.95 per pound.

References Cited

- American Metal Market, 2008, Antimony, indium, molybdenum export quotas cut for 2009: American Metal Market, v. 116, no. 41-4, October 16, p. 11.
- CNW Group, 2008 (February 7), VVC Exploration-Beaver Brook antimony mine starts production: CNW Group, 2 p. (Accessed December 17, 2008, at <http://www.newswire.ca>.)
- Metal-Pages, 2008 (February 8), Beaver Brook antimony mine restarts in Canada (update): Metal-Pages, 2 p. (Accessed December 17, 2008, via <http://www.metal-pages.com>.)
- Ryan's Notes, 2008, Sb mine shutdowns in China: Ryan's Notes, v. 14, no. 41, October 13, p. 5.

TABLE 1
SALIENT ANTIMONY STATISTICS¹

(Metric tons, antimony content, unless otherwise specified)

	2007	2008			
		First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter	Year to date
Production:					
Primary smelter	--	--	--	--	--
Secondary	W	W	W	W	W
Imports for consumption:	27,800	6,920	7,710	5,780 ²	20,400 ²
Ore and concentrate	226	54	42	11 ²	107 ²
Metal	5,920	1,960	2,180	1,040 ²	5,180 ²
Oxide ³	21,700	4,900	5,490	4,730 ²	15,100 ²
Exports:	3,900	899	1,480	1,040 ²	3,410 ²
Metal, alloys, and scrap (gross weight)	725	226	290	236 ²	752 ²
Oxide ³	3,170	673	1,190	799 ²	2,660 ²
Consumption of primary antimony	9,690 ^r	2,720 ^r	2,430 ^r	2,190	7,330
Price: Average cents per pound ⁴	257.25	266.87	283.95	298.10	282.97
Stocks, end of period ⁵	1,900 ^r	1,930 ^r	1,910 ^r	1,880	XX

^rRevised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data. XX Not applicable. -- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits, except prices.

²Data for July and August only; September data were not available at time of publication.

³Antimony content is calculated by the U.S. Geological Survey.

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

⁵Producer and consumer stocks.

TABLE 2
INDUSTRY STOCKS OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY
IN THE UNITED STATES¹

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class of material	2008 ²		
	First quarter ^r	Second quarter ^r	Third quarter
Oxide	1,460	1,450	1,420
Other ³	473	457	465
Total	1,930	1,910	1,880

^rRevised.

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

²Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents and respondents who held 48% of the total stocks of antimony at the end of 2007.

³Includes ore and concentrate, sulfide, and residues.

TABLE 3
CONSUMPTION OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY^{1,2}

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class of material consumed	2007 ^f	2008			
		First quarter ^f	Second quarter ^f	Third quarter	Year to date
Oxide	8,160	2,290	2,080	1,840	6,210
Other ³	1,530	424	351	351	1,130
Total	9,690	2,720	2,430	2,190	7,330

^fRevised.

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

²Estimated 100% coverage based quarterly respondents and respondents who consumed 73% of the total antimony in 2007.

³Includes ores and concentrates, metal, sulfide, and residues.

TABLE 4
CONSUMPTION OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY, BY CLASS OF MATERIAL PRODUCED¹

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Product	2007 ^f	2008			
		First quarter ^f	Second quarter ^f	Third quarter	Year to date
Metal ²	2,620	W	W	W	W
Nonmetal ³	3,500	W	W	W	W
Flame-retardants:					
Plastics	2,710	44	64	41	149
Other ⁴	870	196	143	125	464
Total	3,580	240	207	166	613
Reported consumption	9,690	729	642	586	1,960
Total consumption ⁵	XX	2,720	2,430	2,190	7,330

^fRevised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; included with "Reported consumption." XX Not applicable.

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

²Includes ammunition, antimonial lead, bearing metals and bearings, cable coverings, castings, sheet and pipe, and solder.

³Includes adhesives, pigments, rubber, and textiles.

⁴Includes ammunition primers, pigments, ceramics and glass, and plastics.

⁵Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents and respondents who consumed 74% of the total antimony in 2007.

TABLE 5
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ANTIMONY, BY CLASS AND COUNTRY¹

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class and country	2007	2008					January- August ²
		First quarter	Second quarter	June	July	August	
Ore and concentrate:							
Bolivia	139	34	20	--	11	--	65
Other	87	20	22	2	--	--	42
Total	226	54	42	2	11	--	107
Metal:							
China	3,770	1,560	1,550	366	352	400	3,860
Mexico	648	269	318	15	34	23	644
Peru	419	75	174	92	18	57	324
Other	1,080	60	135	97	135	20	351
Total	5,920	1,960	2,180	570	540	500	5,180
Oxide:³							
Belgium	1,700	567	521	160	174	73	1,340
China	11,600	2,490	2,580	537	1,620	1,070	7,770
Mexico	7,970	1,710	2,290	697	649	1,030	5,670
Other	349	136	91	45	74	34	335
Total	21,700	4,900	5,490	1,440	2,520	2,210	15,100
Grand total	27,800	6,920	7,710	2,010	3,070	2,710	20,400
Other antimony compounds (gross weight)	24	--	9	--	--	5	14

-- Zero.

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

²May include revisions to prior months' data.

³Antimony content is calculated by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.