

Mineral Industry Surveys

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GOLD IN DECEMBER 2009

U.S. mines produced 18,200 kilograms (kg) of gold in December, a 4% increase compared with revised November production, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. The year-to-date production for 2009 was 215,000 kg, 8% lower than 2008 gold production. The average daily gold production for U.S. mines was 589 kilograms per day (kg/d) in December, compared with 584 kg/d for November, 589 kg/d for 2009, and 638 kg/d for full year 2008.

The average Engelhard Industries' gold price was \$1,135.44 per troy ounce for December a slight increase as compared with the average gold price in November and the third consecutive month that the monthly average price was above the \$1,000-per-troy-ounce level. The gold price began the month at \$1,195.18 per troy ounce, then rose to an alltime high of \$1,215.21 per troy ounce on December 2. Many analysts believed that Barrick Gold Corp.'s (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) announcement that it had eliminated its gold hedges was the main cause of the price increase. The price steadily decreased to about \$1,100 per troy ounce by the end of the year (Fiscor, 2009). For 2009, the gold price averaged \$973.73 per troy ounce, 11% higher than the 2008 average.

Barrick announced that the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit ruled on the appeals for the Cortez Hills Mine expansion project in Nevada. In January 2009, the plaintiffs, two activist groups and two Western Shoshone tribes, appealed

the District Court ruling that was in favor of Barrick and the BLM. The plaintiffs reportedly had previously dismissed their Religious Freedom Restoration Act claims; the remaining claims were made under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and were challenges to the Federal Government's Environmental Impact Statement process. The Federal Court agreed with the District Court that the plaintiffs had not established a likelihood of success. However, the Federal Court also ruled against the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on the adequacy of its environmental analysis of the project. There were three areas of concerns that the BLM must research—transportation and treatment of refractory ore, mine dewatering mitigation plans, and particulate emissions. BLM had approved the mine plan in November 2008 after several years of studies and extensive public consultation and review. In 2009, the underground operations started up, and recently Barrick began producing ore from the open pit (Barrick Gold Corp., 2009).

References Cited

- Barrick Gold Corp., 2009, Appeals court remands decision to District Court on Cortez Hills project: Toronto, Ontario, Canada, Barrick Gold Corp. press release, December 4, 2 p.
Fiscor, Steve, 2009, Gold breaks the \$1,200/oz mark: *Engineering & Mining Journal*, v. 210, no. 10, December, p. 96.

TABLE 1
MINE PRODUCTION OF RECOVERABLE GOLD IN THE UNITED
STATES, BY STATE¹

(Kilograms)

	Nevada	Other States ²	Total
2008: ^P			
December	19,100	5,410	24,500
January-December	178,000	55,400	233,000
2009:			
January	13,500	3,900	17,400
February	12,000	4,220	16,200
March	14,000	5,930	19,900
April	12,600	4,860	17,400
May	12,400	5,730	18,100
June	13,400	5,180	18,600
July	12,500	5,000	17,500
August	12,800	5,650	18,500
September	13,300	4,680	18,000
October	12,100	5,420	17,500
November	11,600	5,960 ^r	17,500 ^r
December	12,800	5,430	18,200
January-December	153,000	62,000	215,000

^PPreliminary. ^rRevised.

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

²Includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, South Dakota, Utah, and Washington.

TABLE 2
GOLD PRICES

(Dollars per troy ounce)

Engelhard Industries:	
2008:	
Low/date	714.36 Oct. 24
High/date	1,013.62 Mar. 17
Average	767.57
2009:	
November:	
Low/date	1,063.45/3
High/date	1,182.41/25
Average	1,124.58
December:	
Low/date	1,086.49/22
High/date	1,215.21/2
Average	1,135.44
Year to date:	
Low/date	812.03 Jan. 15
High/date	1,215.21 Dec. 2
Average	973.73
Handy and Harman:	
2008, Average	
	766.00
2009:	
November	1,122.03
December	1,212.50
Year to date	972.37
London Final:	
2008, Average	
	765.79
2009:	
November	1,127.04
December	1,212.50
Year to date	972.35

Source: Platts Metals Week.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF GOLD¹

(Kilograms of gold content, unless otherwise specified)

Period and country	Ores and concentrates ²	Doré and precipitates	Refined bullion ³	Total ⁴	Waste and scrap (gross weight)	Metal powder (gross weight)	Gold compounds (gross weight)
Imports for consumption:							
2008	27,500	85,100	118,000	231,000	36,500	322	102,000
2009:							
October	2,590	12,700	11,700	27,100	4,230	16	35,800
November:							
Canada	15 ⁵	--	5,410 ⁵	5,420	431 ⁵	--	--
Chile	--	100	383	483	--	--	--
Colombia	--	2,540	1,350	3,890	--	--	--
Costa Rica	--	44	--	44	221 ⁵	--	--
Dominican Republic	--	134	--	134	1,940 ⁵	--	--
El Salvador	--	--	1	1	400	--	--
Guatemala	--	1,380 ⁵	--	1,380	116 ⁵	--	--
Guyana	--	270	--	270	--	--	--
Honduras	--	140	--	140	482	--	--
Mexico	1,010 ⁵	7,530 ⁵	2,570	11,100	916 ⁵	38 ⁵	--
Nicaragua	--	95	6 ⁵	101	124	--	--
Peru	--	298	--	298	--	--	--
South Africa, Republic	--	--	1,500	1,500	--	--	--
Switzerland	--	1,560	470	2,030	--	--	--
United Kingdom	--	102	2	104	62 ⁵	--	--
Other	2 ⁵	130	128	260	269 ⁵	21 ⁵	2 ⁵
Total	1,020	14,300	11,800	27,200	4,960	59	2
Year to date	43,800	132,000	117,000	293,000	39,700	464	63,300
Exports:							
2008	2,430	106,000	460,000	568,000	886,000	1,200	2,920,000
2009:							
October	271	8,550	24,200	33,100	106,000	44	200,000
November:							
Belgium	--	--	--	--	5,940	--	--
Canada	--	--	14	14	7,080 ⁵	4	53,000 ⁵
China	--	--	--	--	--	--	3,130 ⁵
Ecuador	--	--	--	--	--	--	626 ⁵
France	2	--	--	2	--	(6)	759 ⁵
Germany	4 ⁵	35	4	44	33,700 ⁵	--	1,290 ⁵
Hong Kong	45	--	11	56	--	2	4,390 ⁵
India	--	--	19	19	--	--	865 ⁵
Ireland	--	--	--	29	--	--	1,920 ⁵
Japan	--	--	--	--	53	1 ⁵	1,890 ⁵
Korea, Republic of	33 ⁵	--	--	33	--	1	291 ⁵
Mexico	19	--	187	206	--	1 ⁵	1,990 ⁵
Netherlands	--	--	--	--	--	--	2,310 ⁵
Singapore	--	--	5	5	--	--	116,000 ⁵
Switzerland	--	5,430	728	6,160	438	--	--
Taiwan	--	--	--	--	--	(6)	10,900 ⁵
United Kingdom	3	2	15,000	15,000	35,700 ⁵	10	2,320 ⁵
Other	167 ⁵	72	72	282	68 ⁵	2 ⁵	815 ⁵
Total	273	5,540	16,000	21,800	82,900	21	202,000
Year to date	1,980	90,400	256,000	348,000	697,000	308	2,360,000

-- Zero.

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

²Includes gold content of base metal ores, concentrates, and matte imported for refining.

³Bullion also moves in both directions between U.S. markets and foreign stocks on deposit in the Federal Reserve Bank. Monetary gold excluded.

⁴"Waste and scrap," "Metal powder," and "Gold compounds" not included in "Total."

⁵All or part of these data have been referred to the U.S. Census Bureau for verification.

⁶Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.