



U.S. Department of the Interior • Bureau of Mines

MINERAL INDUSTRY SURVEYS

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Magnesium, Quarterly

MAGNESIUM IN THE SECOND QUARTER 1990

Domestic production of primary magnesium was 37,628 metric tons in the second quarter, about the same as that in the previous quarter and slightly higher than that in the second quarter of 1989, according to the Bureau of Mines, U.S. Department of the Interior. Primary magnesium shipments of 36,681 tons in the second quarter of 1990 were slightly lower than in the previous quarter. Producers' stocks increased to 21,898 tons.

Producers' price quotes did not change in the second quarter. Primary magnesium ingot was quoted at \$1.63 per pound, and diecasting alloy was quoted at

\$1.43 per pound.

Magnesium imports through May were 62% higher than those in the same period of 1989, and magnesium exports through May 1990 were 9% less than those through May 1989.

Technical problems at Magnesium Co. of Canada Ltd.'s (MagCan) 12,500-ton-per-year magnesium plant in Alberta continued to delay the plant's startup. Only two of the plant's eight furnaces were operating in July 1990, but MagCan planned to be operating at full capacity by yearend.

The Bureau of Mines is testing a system called **MINES-DATA**, to provide Mineral Industry Surveys on magnesium electronically. The Bureau expects that users with microcomputers and communications equipment in the United States and abroad can obtain magnesium data up to 4 weeks sooner than was previously possible. Quarterly data usually will be available approximately 40 work days after the end of the period covered. Second quarter data, which are given in this report, were available on **MINES-DATA** on August 17. See page 3 for details on how to use **MINES-DATA**.

Fig. 1 - U.S. primary magnesium production, shipments, and inventories

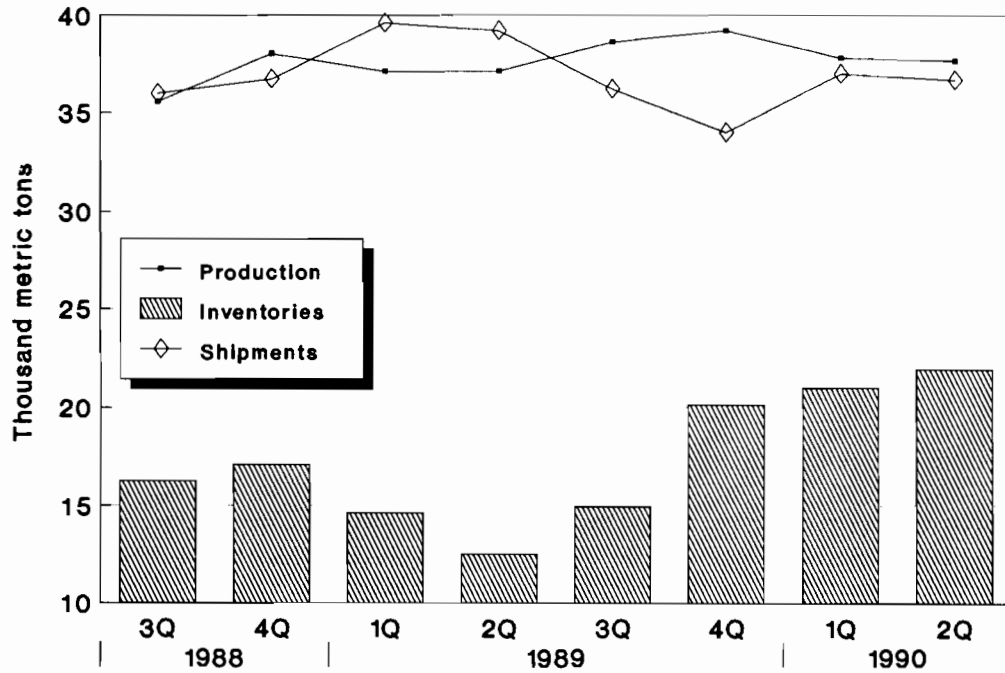


Table 1. - U.S. imports for consumption and exports of magnesium

(Metric tons)

	1989 Final	1990				
		Jan.-Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jan.- May
Imports:						
Metallic and scrap	7,652	1,445	856	1,368	1,457	5,126
Alloys (magnesium content)	3,830	151	371	581	396	1,499
Sheet, tubing, ribbons, wire, powder, and other (magnesium content)	808	207	108	92	88	495
Total	12,290	1,803	1,335	2,041	1,941	7,120
Exports:						
Metallic and scrap	44,639	8,331	4,579	3,547	2,922	19,379
Alloys (gross weight)	3,850	876	369	323	317	1,885
Sheet, tubing, ribbons, wire, powder, and other (gross weight)	8,145	626	475	300	565	1,966
Total	56,634	9,833	5,423	4,170	3,804	23,230

Source: Bureau of the Census.

How To Use MINES-DATA

MINES-DATA is an electronic data dissemination system that allows users to download Bureau of Mines' Mineral Industry Surveys on magnesium and certain other commodities using personal computers. **MINES-DATA** is in the early stages of implementation and improvements are expected. The user needs a computer, a modem, communications software, a telephone line, and a disk for storing the downloaded files. A hard disk is recommended to assure sufficient storage capacity. There is no cost to use the system except for the cost of the telephone call.

There are three types of files on the system—text (ASCII) files that have the extension “.TXT”, Lotus files that have the extension “.WKS”, and executable files that have the extension “.EXE”. Text files contain no formatting codes, Lotus files contain arithmetic formulas and formatting codes, and executable files contain all the text and Lotus files for the Mineral Industry Survey for a given quarter in a data compressed format to facilitate faster data transfer.

Before calling, users should set their modems to call at either 1200 baud or 2400 baud, 8 data bits, no parity, and one stop bit (1200,N,8,1) or (2400,N,8,1). The telephone number is: 202-634-4637. First time users must register, provide a password, and answer questions such as whether their computer supports graphics or color screens. Turning on turbo-keys means that a user does not need to use the return or enter key after selecting a command. Users have an option to provide a default protocol. The recommended protocol is Ymodem. However, Xmodem is acceptable if the user's communications software does not support Ymodem. Both Ymodem and Xmodem are error checking protocols that employ algorithms to detect errors in data transmission. After the user answers the questions, the system stores the answers in a user profile. A user may change the information stored in his profile at any time by selecting “U” or utilities from the main menu.

After answering the introductory questions from the main menu the user may want to read bulletins by selecting the letter “B”, and then selecting the number correspond-

ing to the bulletin desired. After reading the bulletins, the user may select the letter “F” from the main menu to see the files submenu. The user should select the letter “L” to list the commodities that are available on the system. The user then types the name of the commodity that they want to see, e.g. “MAGNESIUM”, and a listing of the files corresponding to that commodity is presented. If a user wants to download all of the files for the Second Quarter Magnesium Mineral Industry Survey, the user types the filename “MG2QT90.EXE”, followed by a return or enter key. The user should consult his communications software instructions for downloading procedures. A brief description of some of these instructions is contained in bulletin #3. The communications program notifies the user after a successful download. The user selects the letter “Q” to quit and the letter “G” for goodbye to sign off the system.

After logging off the system, the user has the option to print the text files or import the Lotus files into a spreadsheet capable of handling Lotus files, and printing them from the spreadsheet. To print text (.TXT) files, a user must set his printer to compressed print in order to avoid word wrap of tables exceeding 80 columns in width. If the user has downloaded an “.EXE” file, e.g. filename “MG2QT90.EXE,” typing the filename without the .EXE extension will extract and decompress the text and Lotus files. The user then may use the DOS “PRINT” command to print the individual text files.

Questions on how to use **MINES-DATA** should be directed to the systems operator answering service in the Branch of Nonferrous Metals, 202-634-9632, available 24 hours-per-day. Written questions, comments or suggestions for improving this system also would be appreciated and may be sent to:

Bureau of Mines
Branch of Nonferrous Metals
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