

Mineral Industry Surveys

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MAGNESIUM IN THE FIRST QUARTER 2014

U.S. magnesium exports in the first quarter of 2014 were 19% less than exports in the first quarter of 2013. Mexico (35%), Canada (21%), Singapore (17%), and Brazil (14%) were the principal destinations. Exports of alloys, metal, and semifabricated products decreased by 21%, 14%, and 51%, respectively, while exports of waste and scrap increased by 59%. Magnesium imports for consumption in the first quarter of 2014 were 21% more than imports in the first quarter of 2013. Israel was the source of 73% of imported magnesium metal, Russia (13%), Canada (7%), and Brazil (6%). Scrap accounted for 36% of the total first quarter 2014 imports, 32% of which came from Canada, and 20% came from Mexico.

The quoted U.S. magnesium price ranges (table 2) were unchanged during the first quarter of 2014. However, U.S. spot prices for imported magnesium declined by 3% and those in China and Europe declined by 5% and 2%, respectively. The price declines in China and Europe during the quarter were attributed to relative changes in currency valuations, stagnant

demand for exports from China, and abundant supplies of magnesium in China (Yee, 2014a, b).

The China Magnesium Association reported that consumption of primary magnesium in China in 2013 was 351,500 metric tons (t), an increase of 13.4% from consumption in 2012. Production of primary magnesium in China in 2013 was 770,000 t, an increase of 3.7% compared with production in 2012. Aluminum alloys and titanium production were cited for the increased consumption of magnesium (Shair, 2014).

References Cited

- Shair, Wendy, 2014, China's 2013 primary magnesium usage up 13%: *Platts Metals Daily*, v. 3, no. 40, February 26, p. 7.
Yee, Alvin, 2014a, Chinese magnesium export offers slip further: *Platts Metals Daily*, v. 3, no. 51, March 13, p. 3–4.
Yee, Alvin, 2014b, Chinese magnesium offers weak as yuan remains soft: *Platts Metals Daily*, v. 3, no. 66, April 3, p. 5–6.

TABLE 1
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION AND EXPORTS OF MAGNESIUM¹

(Metric tons)

	2014				
	2013	January	February	March	January– March
Imports for consumption:					
Metal	15,200	1,550	1,020	1,750	4,320
Waste and scrap	17,500	1,580	1,430	1,920	4,940
Alloys (magnesium content)	12,400	2,120	1,510	481	4,110
Sheet, tubing, ribbons, wire, powder, and other (magnesium content)	835	77	84	98	258
Total	45,900	5,320	4,050	4,250	13,600
Exports:					
Metal	5,790	448	629	666	1,740
Waste and scrap	471	50	42	154	246
Alloys (gross weight)	8,240	505	510	708	1,720
Sheet, tubing, ribbons, wire, powder, and other (gross weight)	1,600	61	94	134	289
Total	16,100	1,060	1,280	1,660	4,000

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 2
MAGNESIUM PRICES, FIRST QUARTER 2014

		Beginning of quarter	End of quarter
U.S. spot dealer import	dollars per pound	1.90–1.95	1.82–1.93
U.S. spot Western	do.	2.10–2.15	2.10–2.15
China	dollars per metric ton	2,600–2,630	2,470–2,500
European free market	do.	2,700–2,800	2,625–2,750
do. Ditto.			

Source: Platts Metals Week.