

MICA (NATURAL)

(Data in metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Domestic Production and Use: Scrap and flake mica production, excluding low-quality sericite, was estimated to be 23,000 tons valued at \$3.3 million. Mica was mined in Georgia and North Carolina. Scrap mica was recovered principally from mica and sericite schist and as a byproduct from the production of feldspar and kaolin and the beneficiation of industrial sand. Eight companies produced an estimated 52,000 tons of ground mica valued at about \$15 million from domestic and imported scrap and flake mica. Most of the domestic production was processed into small-particle-size mica by either wet or dry grinding. Primary uses were joint compound, oil-well-drilling additives, paint, roofing, and rubber products.

A minor amount of sheet mica has been produced as incidental production from feldspar mining in North Carolina in the past several years. Data on sheet mica production were not available in 2024. The domestic consuming industry was dependent on imports to meet demand for sheet mica. Most sheet mica was fabricated into parts for electrical and electronic equipment.

Salient Statistics—United States:	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024^e
Scrap and flake:					
Production: ^{e, 1}					
Sold or used	34,600	40,600	42,000	37,000	23,000
Ground	59,900	66,800	66,300	61,000	52,000
Imports ²	20,400	24,100	22,600	19,400	20,000
Exports ³	3,980	4,850	4,450	3,640	4,100
Consumption, apparent ^{e, 4}	50,000	59,800	60,200	53,000	39,000
Price, average, dollars per metric ton: ^e					
Scrap and flake	120	100	100	100	140
Ground:					
Dry	303	299	300	300	300
Wet	337	336	350	350	310
Net import reliance ⁵ as a percentage of apparent consumption	31	32	30	30	41
Sheet:					
Sold or used	W	NA	NA	NA	NA
Imports ⁶	2,840	3,980	4,300	4,320	4,400
Exports ⁷	528	633	804	1,010	800
Consumption, apparent ^{e, 4}	2,310	3,350	3,490	3,310	3,600
Price, average value, muscovite and phlogopite mica, dollars per kilogram: ^e					
Block	W	W	W	W	W
Splittings	1.57	1.88	1.60	1.80	1.80
Net import reliance ⁵ as a percentage of apparent consumption	100	100	100	100	100

Recycling: None.

Import Sources (2020–23): Scrap and flake: China, 40%; Canada, 35%; India, 9%; Finland, 5%; and other, 11%. Sheet: China, 79%; Brazil, 6%; India, 4%; and other, 11%.

Tariff:	Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations 12–31–24
Split block mica	2525.10.0010		Free.
Mica splittings	2525.10.0020		Free.
Unworked, other	2525.10.0050		Free.
Mica powder	2525.20.0000		Free.
Mica waste	2525.30.0000		Free.
Plates, sheets, and strips of agglomerated or reconstituted mica	6814.10.0000		2.7% ad valorem.
Worked mica and articles of mica, other	6814.90.0000		2.6% ad valorem.

Depletion Allowance: 22% (domestic), 14% (foreign).

Government Stockpile: None.

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Events, Trends, and Issues: Domestic production and consumption of scrap and flake mica was estimated to have decreased significantly in 2024, following the indefinite closure of one facility in South Dakota in late 2023 and storm damage from Hurricane Helene in western North Carolina in October 2024 that caused temporary facility closures in that region. At the beginning of 2024, the number of drill rigs operating in the United States was 622;⁸ by the end of October 2024, the number of rigs operating had declined to 585,⁸ likely indicating that less mica was consumed in well drilling. Rig counts remained 39% lower than that in the same period in 2019 before the global coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic in 2020.

Apparent consumption of sheet mica was estimated to have increased by 9% compared with that in 2023, as imports were slightly higher than those in 2023 and exports were lower. Supplies of sheet mica for United States consumption were expected to continue to be from imports, primarily from China and some from Brazil.

World Mine Production and Reserves: World production of sheet mica has remained steady; however, reliable production data for some countries that were estimated to be major contributors to the world total were unavailable. Reserves for the Republic of Korea were revised based on Government reports.

	Scrap and flake		Sheet		Reserves ⁹	
	Mine production ^e 2023	Mine production ^e 2024	Reserves ⁹	Mine production ^e 2023	Mine production ^e 2024	
United States	37,000	23,000	Large	NA	NA	Very small
Canada	13,000	12,000	Large	NA	NA	NA
China	80,000	80,000	1,100,000	NA	NA	75,000
Finland	¹⁰ 49,900	50,000	Large	NA	NA	NA
France	13,000	12,000	Large	NA	NA	NA
India	14,000	13,000	Large	1,000	1,000	110,000
Korea, Republic of	¹⁰ 19,900	20,000	12,000,000	—	—	NA
Madagascar	63,000	85,000	Large	—	—	NA
Spain	9,000	9,000	Large	—	—	NA
Turkey	¹⁰ 8,720	8,800	620,000	—	—	NA
Other countries	71,000	65,000	Large	200	200	Moderate
World total (rounded)	379,000	380,000	Large	NA	NA	NA

World Resources:⁹ Resources of scrap and flake mica are available in clay deposits, granite, pegmatite, and schist, and are considered more than adequate to meet anticipated world demand in the foreseeable future. World resources of sheet mica have not been formally evaluated because of the sporadic occurrence of this material. Large deposits of mica-bearing rock are known to exist in countries such as Brazil, India, and Madagascar. Limited resources of sheet mica are available in the United States. Domestic resources were subeconomic because of the high cost of the hand labor required to mine and process sheet mica from pegmatites.

Substitutes: Some lightweight aggregates, such as diatomite, perlite, and vermiculite, may be substituted for ground mica when used as filler. Ground synthetic fluorophlogopite, a fluorine-rich mica, may replace natural ground mica for uses that require the thermal and electrical properties of mica. Many materials can be substituted for mica in numerous electrical, electronic, and insulation uses. Substitutes include acrylic, cellulose acetate, fiberglass, fishpaper, nylatron, nylon, phenolics, polycarbonate, polyester, polyvinyl chloride, styrene, and vulcanized fiber. Mica paper made from scrap mica can be substituted for sheet mica in electrical and insulation applications.

^eEstimated. NA Not available. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data. — Zero.

¹Excludes low-quality sericite used primarily for brick manufacturing.

²Includes data for the following Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States codes: 2525.10.0050, <\$6.00 per kilogram; 2525.20.0000; and 2525.30.0000.

³Includes data for the following Schedule B numbers: 2525.10.0000, <\$6.00 per kilogram; 2525.20.0000; and 2525.30.0000.

⁴Defined as sold or used by producing companies + imports – exports.

⁵Defined as imports – exports.

⁶Includes data for the following Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States codes: 2525.10.0010; 2525.10.0020; 2525.10.0050, >\$6.00 per kilogram; 6814.10.0000; and 6814.90.0000.

⁷Includes data for the following Schedule B numbers: 2525.10.0000, >\$6.00 per kilogram; 6814.10.0000; and 6814.90.0000.

⁸Source: Baker Hughes Co., 2024, North America rotary rig count: Baker Hughes Co. (Accessed October 24, 2024, at <https://bakerhughesrigcount.gcs-web.com/na-rig-count.>)

⁹See Appendix C for resource and reserve definitions and information concerning data sources.

¹⁰Reported.