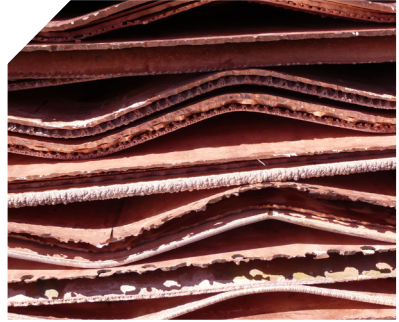


THE HISTORY OF COPPER

Copper, which comes from the Latin word, *cuprum*, meaning "from the island of Cyprus," is one of the oldest metals known to civilization, dating back more than 10,000 years. Copper's uses and contributions to society continue to grow as people become more reliant on technology in their everyday lives. Below is a brief timeline of the historical uses of copper.

- Copper was the first metal humans mined because it could be found at surface level and was easy to shape.
- Approximately 5,000 years ago people discovered that if copper was mixed with other metals it could become stronger and therefore have more uses.
- The first tools, implements and weapons were made from copper.
- Copper is an antimicrobial, meaning it can kill disease-causing bacteria. The Egyptians, Greeks, Romans and Aztecs used copper compounds for good hygiene and to treat disease. Today, we use copper for antimicrobial medicines, oral hygiene products, hygienic medical devices and antiseptics.



- In the early 19th century, inventions related to electricity and the products manufactured from copper helped launch the Industrial Revolution and a new era of higher consumption of the metal.
- Since 1900, demand for refined copper increased from less than 500 thousand tons to nearly 20 million metric tons in 2011.
- Copper has the desirable properties of being malleable and ductile, meaning it can be hammered and molded into shapes or drawn into wire. In its pure form, copper is used in many products including: consumer electronics, telecommunication cables, piping, roofing, motor and transformer wiring and electronic circuitry.



Sources:

International Copper Association, <http://copperalliance.org/history-of-copper/>

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