

Think Recycling



FACT SHEET-4

Canny Facts From Can History

Aluminium is the most abundant metal on earth and the second most widely used metal in the world today.

1 million tonnes of aluminium is used in the UK every year.

In the Beginning

Aluminium was discovered in the 1807 by Sir Humphry Davy (who also invented the miner's safety lamp). But it was another 60 years before a method to enable commercial production was developed.

Up until this time the cost of producing aluminium was so high that the metal was considered 'semi-precious'. In fact the French Emperor Napoleon had a ceremonial dinner service made from aluminium!

Raw Materials

Aluminium is produced from an ore, called bauxite. The name bauxite comes from the town of Les Baux, in southern France. It was here that bauxite was first mined commercially.

Aluminium never occurs in its metallic form in nature. It occurs in compound form in rocks and soil, as well as in vegetation and in all of the earth's water.

Today the world's major bauxite producing areas are:

South America
Africa

Latin America
Australia



