Glossary

Beneficiation Industrial processes that extract the desired commodity from a rock and/or mineral.

Cleavage Describes how a mineral breaks. If present, minerals will break cleanly along cleavage planes.

Commodity The element, mineral, or rock used to make products

Density The amount of matter in a given amount of space. Can be calculated using mass divided by volume.

Element An atom with distinct properties. All known elements are listed on the periodic table.

Igneous rock A rock made when an existing rock melts to create magma, and then that magma cools and becomes solid.

Metamorphic rock A rock made when an existing rock changes due to high temperature, reactive fluids, and/or high pressure.

Mineral A substance that is solid, inorganic, natural, chemically homogenous, and crystalline.

Mineral resource Any mineral or rock mined from the earth and used in products.

Refractory Relatively unreactive, with low solubility, and high melting point.

Rock A natural, coherent solid.

Sedimentary rock A rock made when an existing rock weathers to create sediment. The sediment then erodes, deposits and lithifies to make the sedimentary rock.

Silicates (silicate minerals) Minerals containing silicon and oxygen (silicate ions). Most rock-forming minerals are silicates because there is more silicon and oxygen within Earth's crust and mantle than any other elements.

Specific gravity Relative density (the density of a rock divided by the density of water). If measured in g/cm^3 (grams per cubic centimeter), density and specific gravity are the same, because the density of water is 1 g/cm^3. Heavier minerals have higher specific gravities.