

*** Name Origin:**

From Europe.

*** Sources:**

See Additional Notes.

*** Uses:**

Used with yttrium oxide to make red phosphors for color televisions.

*** Additional Notes:**

In 1890 Boisbaudran obtained basic fractions from samarium-gadolinium concentrates which had spark spectral lines not accounted for by samarium or gadolinium. These lines subsequently have been shown to belong to europium. The discovery of europium is generally credited to Demarcay, who separated the rare earth in reasonably pure form in 1901. The pure metal was not isolated until recent years. Europium is now prepared by mixing Eu_2O_3 with a 10%-excess of lanthanum metal and heating the mixture in a tantalum crucible under high vacuum. The element is collected as a silvery-white metallic deposit on the walls of the crucible. As with other rare-earth metals, except for lanthanum, europium ignites in air at about 150 to 180°C. Europium is about as hard as lead and is quite ductile. It is the most reactive of the rare-earth metals, quickly oxidizing in air. It resembles calcium in its reaction with water. Bastnasite and monazite are the principal ores containing europium. Europium has been identified spectroscopically in the sun and certain stars. Europium isotopes are good neutron absorbers and are being studied for use in nuclear control applications. Europium oxide is now widely used as a phosphor activator and europium-activated yttrium vanadate is in commercial use as the red phosphor in color TV tubes. Europium-doped plastic has been used as a laser material. With the development of ion-exchange techniques and special processes, the cost of the metal has been greatly reduced in recent years. Natural europium contains two stable isotopes. Thirty five other radioactive isotopes and isomers are known. Europium is one of the rarest and most costly of the rare-earth metals.