
Sepiolite Deposits of the Las Vegas, Nevada Area

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Abstract: Four sepiolite deposits of different origin, which occur near Las Vegas, Nevada, are compared and described. They include a playa deposit, a valley terrace deposit, and two types of vein deposits. The physical and chemical characteristics of the four materials are described, the engineering and commercial features are considered, and the varied origins of the sepiolite are discussed. X-ray powder diffraction data, infrared spectra, thermal characteristics, and chemical analyses are given for the Two Crows sepiolite. The vein deposit is proposed for use as a clay mineral reference standard because of its purity and availability. The apparent diverse morphology of the sepiolite deposits is shown with its common, lathlike basic structure.

Key Words: Fibrous • Magnesium • Palygorskite • Sepiolite

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