

Ruddite: A new mineral discovery in Canberra

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YOU thought the periodic table was completed long ago. However, Allan Trench explains that recent events in Canberra have unearthed a new element and its associated mineral species – Ruddite.

Scientists have uncovered a new form of mineral species in Canberra, with the mineral having been assigned the preliminary name of Ruddite.

Geologists are yet to confirm the discovery in the scientific press, suggesting the newly identified mineral may simply be a previously undocumented polymorph of the mineral Fubarite, a common geological term applied to a mineral that has been shattered and metamorphosed beyond all recognition.

A contrasting interpretation has been proposed by a group allegedly affiliated to the Australian Liberal Party, which believes Ruddite is actually a 21st century mineralogical manifestation of Luddite, descended from the British workers who between 1811 and 1816 destroyed labour-saving textile machinery in the mistaken belief that such machinery would diminish future employment.

The discovery of Ruddite has certainly brought together the mining fraternity. A further interpretation, one allegedly originating from a high-profile mining dinner where the prime minister failed to appear, has suggested that Ruddite is of metamorphic origin; and should be more properly referred to as Chickentonite.

Readers are invited to make up their own mind. To that end, your scribe lists some of the chemical and physical properties of Ruddite that have emerged thus far below:

Physical properties

- Colour: bright red
- Surface usually covered with a thin slippery sheen
- Emits copious fumes of hot air when subjected to mild heat
- Bitter to the taste
- Yields if pressure is applied in correct places, most notably in the polling area

Chemical properties

- Strong affinity for carbon dioxide
- Absorbs great quantities of taxpayer funds

- Known to occasionally explode spontaneously; and prone to self-combustion
- Most powerful value-reducing agent known to the mining industry

Identification tests

- Pure specimen gives off a strong smell of insincerity

Storage

- Safest when stored on back benches
- Sequestration via deep burial is currently being investigated for safe disposal

Caution

- Intolerable if ingested in anything other than very small doses

Extraction economics

- Commercial extraction of Ruddite is not possible in Australia. Extraction will attract super profits tax from 2012 that makes mining of the mineral economically unviable.
- Electoral removal of Ruddite is the preferred method of extraction, with the mineral reporting directly into tails waste.

By-product credits

- None known thus far.

If readers are aware of further properties of Ruddite not listed above, then your scientific contributions, subject to peer review, would be most welcome.

Good hunting.

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