



## **Valuable Precious Metals Are Reclaimed and Reused in Aeronautics – Dillon Gage Metals Shares Little-Known Fact**

*Commercial and military airplanes sent to “graveyards” in the U.S. Southwest contain many thousands of dollars worth of precious metals*

ADDISON, TX (11/9/11)...You're probably aware that gold demand is mostly for jewelry – in fact, over three-fourths of it is. But unknown to many people, notes **Dillon Gage Metals**, is that gold, silver and platinum are also employed in aeronautics and space travel. In the last plane ride you took, the craft was most likely coated with a thin, gold film that helped control temperatures during the trip.

“Precious metals are used in airplanes, especially in engines, and when a plane is scrapped, the metals are recovered for their value and recycled,” says Terry Hanlon, president of **Dillon Gage Metals** in Dallas. Gold is useful as a conductor and lubricator, he adds.

Up to 80 percent of an airplane can be recycled, and precious metals can provide half of a plane's recycling value. When engines are scrapped or rebuilt, between \$6,000 and \$18,000 worth of precious metals can be recovered through leaching and radioactive processes. That's no small change considering that gold prices climbed this year, and lots of planes are scrapped in periods of economic weakness and when new models are built.

Gold reached an all-time high of \$1,895 an ounce in August after silver rallied to a lofty \$48.70 an ounce in April.

As for unused planes, they're sent to commercial and military bone yards. Sadly, a few new or almost-new planes have been flown to graveyards during corporate and national credit crunches. Planes were scrapped after 9/11 because air travel suddenly dropped. Only the newest and most efficient aircraft in the graveyards ever return to flying.

According to the U.S. Defense Logistics Agency, gold is used in aeronautical circuitry for relays, transistors, diodes and contact points, while silver is employed in electronic parts and welding and brazing wire. Platinum family metals are utilized in aircraft spark plugs and electronics.

Gold is a dependable conductor and connector in aeronautical circuitry. The yellow metal helps plane parts hold up well, reducing maintenance and repair costs. Thin films of it between moving parts serve as lubricants. Gold molecules pass one another under friction, creating lubricant action. The metal's malleability allows it to be processed into a thin film that can coat and protect moving parts.

And because of gold's reflective qualities, many airplane parts are fitted with gold-coated, polyester film to reflect infrared radiation and stabilize temperatures on board. Otherwise, those dark-looking parts of an aircraft would absorb a tremendous amount of heat. Gold is also used in space suits. A thin coating is applied to suits worn by astronauts to protect them from radiation and deflect burning sunlight.

Because gold is expensive, it's only used when cheaper substitutes won't do. But considering the number of lives at risk in air and space travel, and the billions of dollars spent on it, precious metals are worth it.

Commercial airplane graveyards are located mainly in the southwestern U.S. The nation's largest cemetery for military aircraft is the Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Arizona. Retired military craft are enrolled in the Defense Department's Precious Metals Recycling Program or PMRP. While Congress

addresses the federal deficit, participation in the recycling program saves tax dollars, conserves natural resources and helps to control mining's impact on the environment.

**Dillon Gage Metal's** state-of-the-art refinery in Dallas specializes in precious metal scrap, and provides rapid processing in as little as 24 hours for high grade materials. "We provide competitive purchasing after metal is melted," Hanlon says. **Dillon Gage Metals** requires that the gold or the combined gold, silver and platinum in a refining lot have a minimum value of \$10,000. For **Dillon Gage's** refining fees, please see <http://www.dillongage.com/metals/refining>.

### **About Dillon Gage Metals**

**Dillon Gage Inc.** (DillonGage.com) was founded in 1976, and its companies include:

- **Dillon Gage Metals**, one of the largest precious metals dealers in the U.S. (DillonGage.com/Metals) 800.375.4653
- **Dillon Gage Refinery**, state of the art refinery located in Dallas, Texas. (dillongage.com/metals/refining) 888.436.3489
- **FizTrade Online Trading** offers real-time trading for bid and ask markets for gold, silver platinum and palladium. (FizTrade.com) 800.375.4653
- **Diamond State Depository**, a wholly owned, independently operated precious metals storage facility located in New Castle, Delaware. (DiamondStateDepository.com) 888.322.6150
- **International Depository Services of Canada** a wholly owned, independently operated precious metals storage facility located in Toronto, Canada. (www.IDSofCanada.com)

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