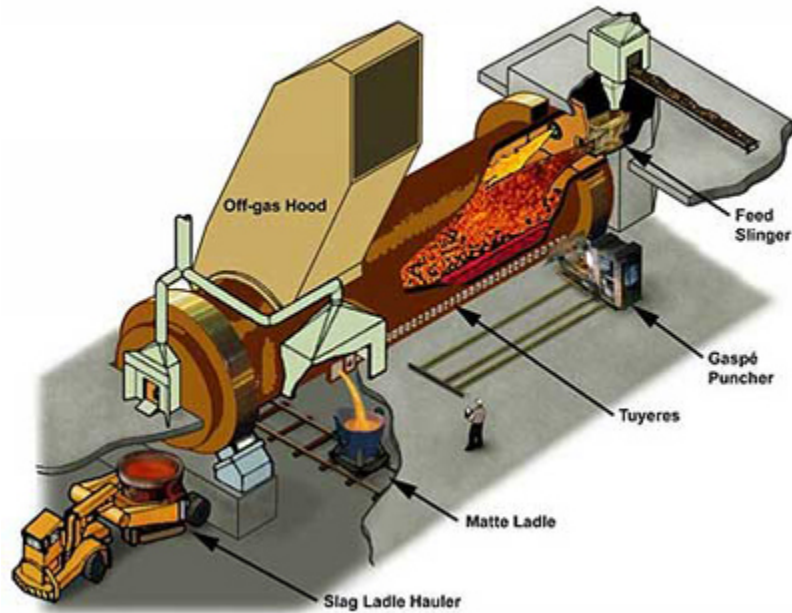


How is Copper useful to us?



“Norsmelt Smelting Process”

Copper is a reddish orange metal that has been used for more than 5000 years. After gold it was the first metal to be discovered by man. Native copper is found in small quantities in solid or granular form. Most of it occurs in the combined state as sulphides, carbonates, silicates and oxides. Copper pyrite is its most important ore. About 50% of world's supply of copper comes from copper pyrite.

History reveals that copper was used by man as early as the Stone Age. By 4000 B.C mining of copper had begun, by 6000 B.C. man had started using instruments, weapons and ornaments of copper. Later, man came to know that bronze, an alloy of Cu, Zn and Sn is harder than Cu. He then used bronze for making utensils, weapons and ornaments. Other alloys of copper like brass are also used for the same purposes. Copper also makes an alloy with aluminum which is called aluminum bronze. As time passed copper came to be one of the most important metals in the world, used extensively in electrical and other industries for making wires, dynamo, coils, motor coils, for minting purposes, to make coins, in engineering industry and so on. Copper is used all over the world for making electric wires because of its softness and tenacity. It is a very good conductor of electricity and heat. Much of the world's copper comes from Canada, USA, Chile, Zambia and Russia.