

BISMUTH'S BACKGROUND

So what is bismuth? Well, the scholarly will note that it is an inert elemental metal that sits squarely between lead (Pb) and polonium (Po) in the Periodic Table of Elements. It has a specific gravity very close (91 percent) to that of lead and is about 14 percent lighter.

Like steel, it's damned hard but malleable enough (when mixed with 3 to 4 percent tin) to be molded into round pellets. Trivia buffs will note that bismuth is the chief ingredient in the timeless upset stomach remedy Pepto-Bismol.