

# TPG

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**ON THE COVER** — The Lake Superior agate is the Minnesota state gemstone. The history of Lake Superior agates traces back to about a billion years ago. The North American continent began to split, creating a large rift valley, and lava welled up in the area of what is now Lake Superior. Bubbles of air were trapped in the lava (similar to the way bubbles of air appear in a pan of water before it begins to boil.) After the lava cooled, water seeped into the holes created by the bubbles and deposited iron, quartz, and other minerals in layers, creating agates. As the surrounding volcanic rock was worn away by erosion or the scouring action of glaciers, agates were released from the lava and moved to other places. "Lakers" are primarily found in exposed sand and gravel deposits, along rivers and streams, or in beach gravel that covers a vast hunting ground in parts of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Iowa, Nebraska, Illinois and Kansas. Photo credit: Scott Wolter, CPG-08260.