

# Saturn's Enceladus Looks Younger than Ever

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April 9, 2015

*A note from Pastor Kevin Lea follows this article.*

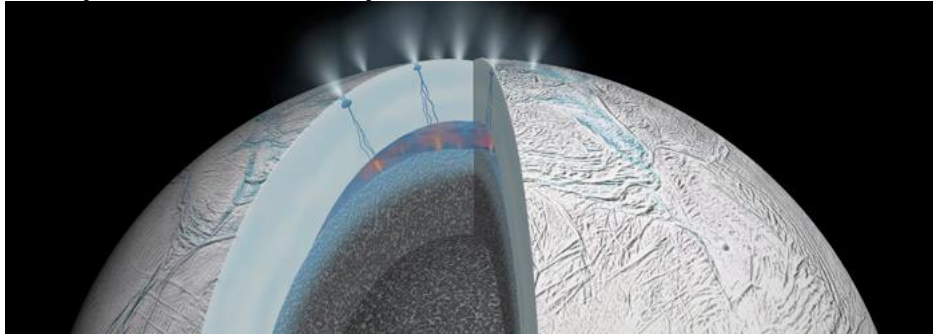


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The more we learn about Enceladus, the younger it looks. Stated another way, the more that our space probes discover about this fascinating little moon that inhabits Saturn's tenuous E ring, the more challenging it becomes for conventional origins to explain. A new discovery adds to the list of young-looking Enceladus features.

The most stunning feature of Saturn's sixth largest moon is undoubtedly its water-ice plumes. The Cassini spacecraft passed by Enceladus several times in 2005 and captured amazing images of these continuous jets. They discharge material and send about a dozen plumes tens of miles into space from the moon's south pole.<sup>1</sup> Enceladus, which would span the breadth of Arizona if it were placed on Earth, simply does not have enough material in it to supply these plumes for 4.5 billion years—it's physically impossible. A NASA article written in 2008 revealed no new answers, saying, "What causes and controls the jets is a mystery."<sup>2</sup>

Then in 2014, Cassini took an even closer look. It found that instead of a dozen plumes, Enceladus has 101 of them. Researchers deduced from these clues that the plume's water ice comes from hot water found below the moon's frozen surface. Not only do Enceladus' jets keep ejecting watery material, but they continually release internal pressure. Clearly, this moon could not have been powering these hot plumes for billions of years.<sup>3</sup> The math doesn't work.

Meanwhile, Cassini measured Enceladus' heat output, published in 2011. After billions of years it should have lost its heat. Yet, secular researchers found it emits over ten times the expected heat.<sup>4</sup> So, Enceladus loses water, water pressure, and heat. No good explanation yet fits these observations into evolutionary time.

New research published in the journal *Nature* reveals its plumes of mostly water-ice also eject silica.<sup>5</sup> "Silica" is short for *silicon dioxide*, an abundant compound in our solar system. Scientists know that silica grains—the size found in Enceladus' plumes—also form in certain hydrothermal vents on Earth. The *Nature* authors reconstructed the conditions under which this silica likely form, which the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory News said is "when slightly alkaline and salty water that is super-saturated with silica undergoes a big drop in temperature."<sup>6</sup> Where did all the silica come from that saturates this moon's subsurface sea and keeps jetting into space?

New measurements also show the moon's south-pole plumes contain methane. Could Enceladus also have supplied this methane for billions of years?

Scientists publishing in *Geophysical Research Letters* modeled the conditions required for ice crystals to trap molecules like methane, finding that this moon could very well meet those conditions.<sup>7</sup> "Their

models indicate that this process is so efficient at depleting the ocean of methane that the researchers still needed an explanation for its abundance in the plume," according to NASA.<sup>6</sup>

They suggested that hot, flowing water at depth supplies methane to the plumes. But even a moon-sized methane fountain cannot run forever.

One way to explain how all this methane, silica, heat, water pressure and water persists in Enceladus is simply that God created Enceladus only thousands of years ago. Maybe it hasn't been hanging around Saturn long enough to have lost its original supplies. Recent creation...

***Note from Pastor Kevin Lea:** Dr. Walt Brown would agree with this author that Enceladus is young, but disagrees that God created it ex nihilo during creation week.*

*Brown's Hydroplate Theory (HPT) explanation of the flood of Noah documents scientific evidence that supports his assertion that Enceladus is made up of water and debris that was ejected from earth during the flood (about 1000 years after the creation week). According to HPT, mineral-laden water and pulverized crustal material were ejected from the earth during the cataclysmic flood global flood, some at velocities sufficient to overcome the earth's gravitational field. Over time, some of this material consolidated through mutual gravitational attraction in space. The body thus formed then accelerated through the jetting effects of the water and spiraled out in the solar system where it was gravitationally captured by Saturn. Those interested should see [Origin of Asteroids](#) for a more detailed explanation.*

*To read this article in its entirety, go to:  
<http://www.icr.org/article/8674>*