

Mineral Industry Surveys

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ZINC IN MARCH 2019

Domestic mine production (recoverable) of zinc in March 2019 was 50,800 metric tons (t) (tables 1, 2). Average daily mine production in March was 1,640 t, 6% more than that in the previous month but 4% less than that in March 2018 (fig. 1). Teck Resources Ltd. (Canada) reported lower zinc- and lead-in-concentrate production at the Red Dog Mine in Alaska in the first quarter of 2019 compared with that in the first quarter of 2018. Severe weather conditions at the mine in January and February resulted in a 20-day shutdown of the mill (Teck Resources Ltd., 2019, p. 17).

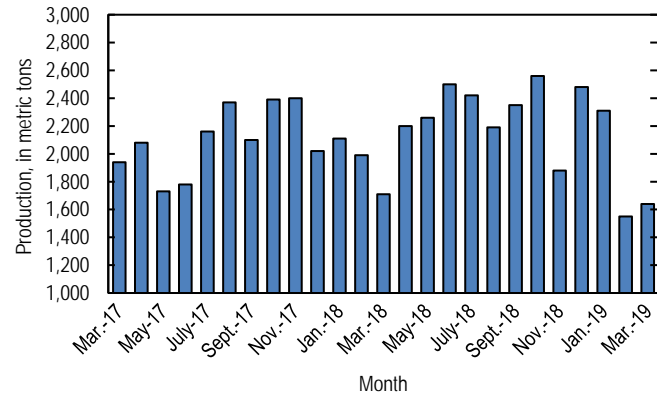


Figure 1. Average daily domestic zinc mine production (recoverable) from March 2017 through March 2019.

Stocks and Prices

Global London Metal Exchange Ltd. (LME) stocks of Special High Grade (SHG) zinc were 51,275 t at the end of March 2019, 21% less than stocks at the end of February and 76% less than stocks at the end of March 2018 (fig. 2, table 7).

The monthly average Platts Metals Week North American SHG zinc price in March 2019 was \$1.38 per pound, 5% higher

than that in the previous month but 12% lower than that in March 2018. The March 2019 average LME cash price for SHG zinc was \$2,850.91 per metric ton, 5% higher than that in February 2019 but 13% lower than that in March 2018 (fig. 3, table 6).

The North American premium to the LME cash price in March 2019 averaged 8.52 cents per pound, essentially unchanged from that in February and slightly more than that in March 2018 (fig. 3, table 6).

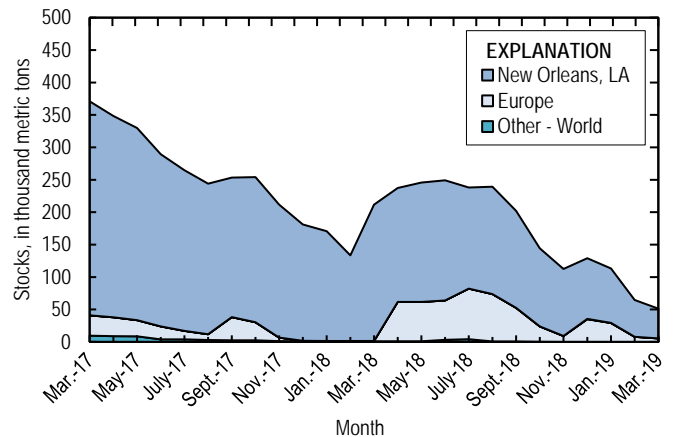


Figure 2. Global LME stocks of Special High Grade zinc, monthend, from March 2017 through March 2019. Source: London Metal Exchange Ltd.

Reference Cited

Teck Resources Ltd., 2019, Teck reports unaudited first quarter results for 2019: Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, Teck Resources Ltd. news release, April 22, 77 p. (Accessed May 24, 2019, at <https://www.teck.com/media/Q1-2019-NR.pdf>.)

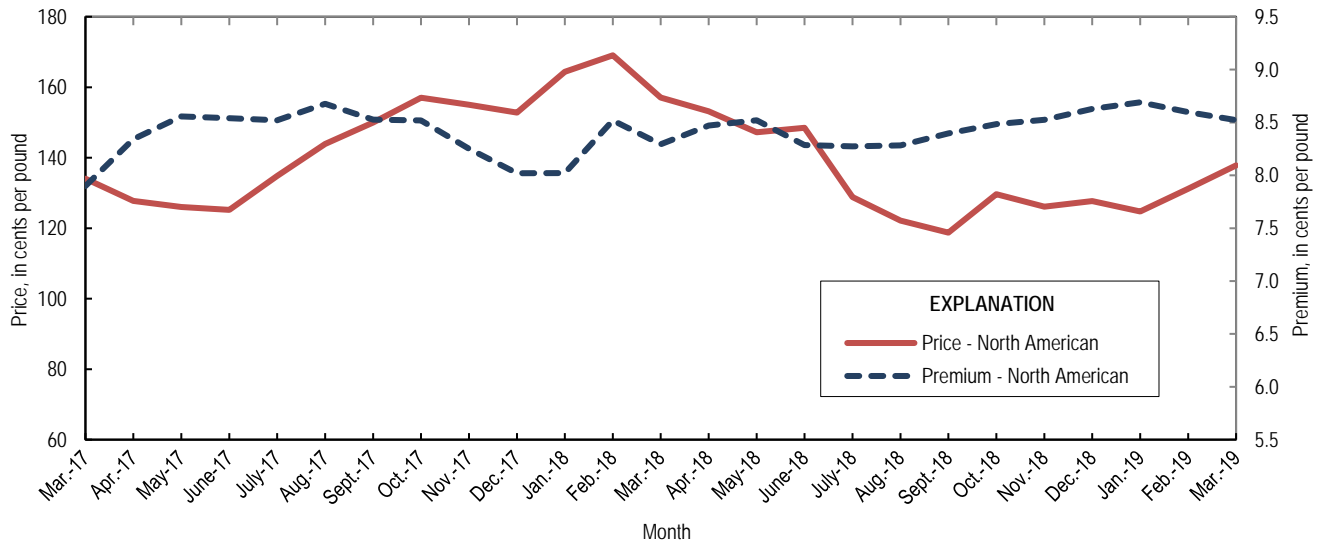


Figure 3. Average monthly North American price and premium for Special High Grade zinc from March 2017 through March 2019. Source: Platts Metals Week.

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TABLE 1
SALIENT ZINC STATISTICS¹

(Metric tons, unless otherwise specified)

	2018	2019		
	January– December ^p	February	March	January– March ²
Production:				
Mine, zinc content of concentrate ³	838,000	44,900	52,700	172,000
Mine, recoverable zinc ³	812,000	43,300	50,800	166,000
Smelter, refined zinc ^e	116,000	8,600 ^r	8,600	25,800
Consumption of refined zinc, apparent ⁴	867,000	67,900 ^r	77,500	227,000
Imports for consumption:				
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	32	--	--	--
Refined zinc	775,000	60,200	69,200	204,000
Exports:				
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	790,000	37,000	37,300	87,400
Refined zinc	23,200	925	319	2,610
Price:⁵				
London Metal Exchange cash, average, dollars per metric ton	2,924.55	2,702.34	2,850.91	2,703.91
Platts Metals Week North American, average, cents per pound	141.05	131.17	137.84	131.25

^eEstimated. ^pPreliminary. ^rRevised. -- Zero

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits, except prices; may not add to totals shown.

²May include revisions to previously published data.

³Reported zinc content in both zinc and lead concentrates.

⁴Smelter production plus imports for consumption minus domestic exports.

⁵Special High Grade Zinc.

TABLE 2
MINE AND SMELTER PRODUCTION OF ZINC
IN THE UNITED STATES¹

(Metric tons)

Period	Mine ²		Smelter ^e
	Zinc content	Recoverable	
2018:			
March	54,900	53,000	10,900
April	67,700	65,900	11,300
May	72,500	70,100	11,300
June	77,500	74,900	11,300
July	77,700	75,100	9,920
August	70,300	68,000	9,920
September	71,700	70,500	9,920
October	82,300	79,500	11,900
November	58,400	56,500	11,900
December	79,600	77,000	11,900
January–December	838,000	812,000	116,000
2019:			
January	74,000	71,600	8,600 ^r
February	44,900	43,300	8,600 ^r
March	52,700	50,800	8,600
January–March	172,000	166,000	25,800

^eEstimated. ^rRevised.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Includes the zinc content in both lead and zinc concentrates.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ZINC¹

(Gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material	2018		2019			
	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	March		January–March ²	
			Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	32	\$23	--	--	--	--
Unwrought:						
Refined zinc	775,000	2,350,000	69,200	\$194,000	204,000	\$552,000
Zinc alloys	4,400	14,300	359	1,000	943	2,620
Wrought:						
Bars, rods, profiles, wire	3,470	13,900	270	992	767	2,730
Plates, sheets, strip, foil	5,410	16,400	318	1,250	731	2,810
Ash and residues:						
Hard zinc spelter	19	31	--	--	--	--
Zinc dross and skimmings	4,280	8,160	410	654	854	1,380
Other (zinc content)	1,230	794	66	60	389	248
Other:						
Powders, flakes, dust	26,600	106,000	2,570	9,170	6,290	23,000
Waste and scrap	12,900	22,100	634	1,340	2,080	3,980
Chemicals:						
Lithopone	272	835	42	190	249	975
Zinc oxide	115,000	334,000	8,860	24,000	26,200	72,300
Zinc chloride	208	1,840	4	41	21	187
Zinc sulfate	98,700	106,000	5,020	4,630	18,400	18,500
Zinc sulfide	2,710	10,400	77	274	227	875

-- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

²May include revisions to previously published data.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. IMPORTS OF ZINC, BY TYPE OF MATERIAL AND COUNTRY OR LOCALITY¹

(Metric tons, gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material and country or locality	General imports			Imports for consumption		
	2018	2019		2018	2019	
		March	January–March ²		March	January–March ²
Ore and concentrate (zinc content):						
Canada	(3)	--	--	(3)	--	--
China	32	--	--	32	--	--
Total	32	--	--	32	--	--
Refined zinc:						
Australia	--	--	--	676	--	--
Belgium	--	--	--	4,340	--	--
Brazil	601	501	1,910	601	501	1,910
Canada	524,000	50,200	130,000	524,000	50,200	130,000
China	22	(3)	9	5,380	700	2,020
India	2,840	--	--	2,840	--	--
Korea, Republic of	--	--	--	6,810	--	24
Mexico	101,000	10,800	29,400	101,000	10,800	29,400
Namibia	--	--	--	122	--	--
Netherlands	--	--	--	6,040	--	125
Peru	46,300	4,380	11,900	46,300	4,380	11,900
Poland	641	--	--	641	--	--
South Africa	5,480	--	--	--	--	--
Spain	20,000	--	--	76,100	2,660	29,100
Taiwan	36	--	5	36	--	5
Other	3	(3)	(3)	3	(3)	(3)
Total	701,000	65,900	173,000	775,000	69,200	204,000
Oxide:						
Australia	127	29	80	127	29	80
Belgium	6	--	10	6	--	10
Brazil	127	--	5	127	--	5
Canada	51,200	4,070	12,200	51,200	4,070	12,200
China	422	13	53	422	13	53
Germany	1,150	75	388	1,150	75	388
Greece	120	--	40	120	--	40
Hong Kong	58	--	--	58	--	--
India	119	4	34	119	4	34
Italy	19	5	5	19	5	5
Japan	776	86	242	776	86	242
Korea, Republic of	76	9	13	76	9	13
Mexico	49,800	3,120	9,880	49,800	3,120	9,880
Netherlands	8,400	1,080	2,470	8,400	1,080	2,470
Peru	2,540	248	481	2,540	248	481
Phillippines	46	--	--	46	--	--
United Kingdom	99	132	314	99	132	314
Other	75	--	--	75	--	--
Total	115,000	8,860	26,200	115,000	8,860	26,200

-- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²May include revisions to previously published data.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
U.S. EXPORTS OF ZINC¹

(Gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material	2018		2019			
	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	March		January–March ²	
			Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	790,000	\$1,500,000	37,300	\$66,200	87,400	\$141,000
Unwrought:						
Refined zinc	23,200	57,800	319	861	2,610	6,810
Zinc alloys	21,100	65,200	1,720	5,230	5,660	16,700
Wrought:						
Bars, rods, profiles, wire	10,600	30,600	816	2,310	2,450	6,970
Plates, sheets, strip, foil	7,170	29,900	383	1,810	1,450	5,650
Ash and residues:						
Hard zinc spelter	8,300	16,200	927	1,760	2,090	3,970
Other (zinc content)	23,900	43,000	2,260	3,360	5,830	8,960
Other:						
Powders, flakes, dust	13,500	56,600	1,880	6,430	4,940	17,600
Waste and scrap	39,900	49,100	2,710	4,370	8,610	12,200
Chemicals:						
Lithopone	179	1,280	10	69	19	137
Zinc oxide	60,200	91,800	921	2,180	2,910	7,090
Zinc chloride	281	438	17	34	48	89
Zinc sulfate	998	874	30	63	170	245
Zinc sulfide	1,730	15,900	333	1,300	604	3,930

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

²May include revisions to previously published data.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 6
AVERAGE PRICES FOR SPECIAL HIGH GRADE ZINC

Period	North	London Metal Exchange	
	American ¹	cash ²	
	¢/lb.	¢/lb.	\$/t
2018:			
March	157.07	148.78	3,280.02
April	153.19	144.72	3,190.48
May	147.20	138.68	3,057.41
June	148.50	140.22	3,091.21
July	128.85	120.57	2,658.18
August	122.14	113.85	2,510.05
September	118.74	110.35	2,432.71
October	129.65	121.17	2,671.26
November	126.11	117.58	2,592.28
December	127.69	119.06	2,624.87
January–December	141.05	132.66	2,924.55
2019:			
January	124.74	116.05	2,558.49
February	131.17	122.58	2,702.34
March	137.84	129.32	2,850.91
January–March	131.25	122.65	2,703.91

¹Platts Metals Week North American price. Based on the London Metal Exchange cash price plus premium.

²Average of the cash buyer price and the cash seller and settlement price.

Source: Platts Metals Week.

TABLE 7
LONDON METAL EXCHANGE (LME) STOCKS OF SPECIAL HIGH GRADE ZINC, END OF PERIOD

(Metric tons)

Period	United States			Europe	Other	Total LME
	Chicago, IL	New Orleans, LA	Total			
2018:						
March	--	210,000	210,000	600	875	212,000
April	--	176,000	176,000	60,700	1,030	237,000
May	--	184,000	184,000	60,700	875	246,000
June	--	185,000	185,000	60,700	3,180	249,000
July	--	156,000	156,000	78,200	4,080	238,000
August	--	165,000	165,000	73,100	675	239,000
September	--	149,000	149,000	51,900	675	202,000
October	--	120,000	120,000	23,500	250	144,000
November	--	104,000	104,000	8,980	25	113,000
December	350	93,600	94,000	35,000	25	129,000
2019:						
January	25	84,000	84,000	29,200	25	113,000
February	--	56,600	56,600	7,900	25	64,600
March	--	45,900	45,900	5,350	25	51,300

-- Zero.

Source: London Metal Exchange, Ltd.