

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN APRIL 2019

U.S. natural soda ash production in April was 999,000 metric tons (t), a 6% increase compared with that of the previous month and 3% more than that of April 2018. Ending stocks were 337,000 t, 18% more than the preceding month's revised inventories of 276,000 t (table 1,4). Wyoming trona production in April 2019 was 1.53 million metric tons (Mt), 9% less than that of March 2019 but 3% more than that of April 2018.

Exports of soda ash in April 2019 were 562,000 t, 11% more than those of March 2019 but 4% less than those of April 2018 (tables 2, 4). April 2019 imports of soda ash were 1,290 t, 24% more than those of March 2019 but 17% less than those of April 2018 (tables 3, 4). Soda ash import tonnages can differ significantly from month to month, but generally are much smaller than soda ash export tonnages.

Apparent consumption for April 2019 was 378,000 t, an 11% decrease from that of March 2019 but 7% more than that of April 2018. Apparent consumption can change significantly from month to month mostly owing to changes in the quantity of

exports but usually stabilizes over the course of the year (table 4).

Table 5 provides reported soda ash consumption statistics for the first quarter of 2019. Reported consumption for the first quarter was 1.17 Mt, 3% less than the reported consumption for the first quarter of 2018. During the first quarter, 545,000 t (47%) went to glassmaking and 335,000 t (29%) was consumed in the production of chemicals.

All percentages in this report were calculated using unrounded data.

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TABLE 1
SALIENT SODA ASH STATISTICS¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Soda ash		Wyoming trona production
	Production ²	Stocks, end of period	
2018:			
January–April	3,920	267 ^r	6,220
April	966	267	1,480
May	952	259	1,450
June	961	248	1,420
July	1,070	282	1,490
August	930	293	1,180
September	988	268	1,320
October	1,010	237	1,500
November	997	309	1,490
December	1,060	297	1,580
January–December	11,900	297	17,600
2019:			
January	1,000	300	1,680
February	920	270	1,500
March	941	276 ^r	1,680
April	999	337	1,530
January–April	3,860	337	6,390

^rRevised.

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

²Production data include soda ash equivalent from soda liquors only. Soda ash equivalent from mine water is not included. Soda liquors are withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

TABLE 2
U.S. EXPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY, IN 2019¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	Quantity	April		January–April		
					Value ² (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)
Argentina	7,000	7,700	--	16,700	\$3,860	\$231	31,400	1	\$7,290
Australia	35,000	4,040	34,000	29,000	7600	262	102,000	4	23,500
Brazil	94,500	104,000	35,000	60,800	12,700	209	294,000	13	62,100
Canada	15,800	17,500	15,200	18,300	4,490	245	66,800	3	15,800
Chile	13,000	45,200	31,500	14,200	3,220	227	104,000	5	23,800
Colombia	8,000	21,400	10,500	8,750	1,830	209	48,700	2	11,000
Ecuador	9,500	--	10,000	--	--	--	19,500	1	4,390
India	--	43,500	--	65,700	12,100	184	109,000	5	19,600
Indonesia	88,100	21,300	90,800	19,400	4,390	226	220,000	10	49,600
Japan	3,000	34,400	15,100	21,500	4,030	187	74,100	3	14,500
Korea, Republic of	11,500	18,000	15,700	34,200	7,330	215	79,400	3	16,800
Malaysia	46,100	62,800	52,500	39,300	8,970	229	201,000	9	44,400
Mexico	144,000	106,000	112,000	114,000	27,900	245	475,000	21	110,000
Peru	17,000	--	16,300	1,280	280	220	34,500	2	7,760
Philippines	7,500	--	--	9,000	2,070	230	16,500	1	3,750
Saudi Arabia	98	10,300	39	15,100	2,700	178	25,500	1	4,520
South Africa	--	10,100	--	4,790	800	167	14,900	1	3,040
Taiwan	16,500	9,500	15,200	38,800	8,470	218	80,000	4	18,500
Thailand	35,100	26,600	35,600	7,500	1,680	224	105,000	5	24,400
Tunisia	--	20,000	--	--	--	--	20,000	1	4,900
United Arab Emirates	--	15,500	--	6,000	1,180	196	21,500	1	3,900
Vietnam	31,000	15,000	18,500	31,500	7,070	224	96,000	4	21,500
Other	4,480 ^r	28,700 ^r	462	6,540	1,220	187	40,100	2	9,740
Total	587,000	621,000	508,000	562,000	124,000	220	2,280,000	100	505,000

^rRevised. -- Zero.

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

²Free alongside ship values at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY, IN 2019¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	Quantity	April		January–April		
					Value ² (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)
Bulgaria	288	612	432	882	\$291	\$330	2,214	49	\$778
China	77	72	180	41	29	707	370	8	243
France	44	91	41	91	133	1,460	267	6	362
Mexico	304	97	252	150	59	397	803	18	295
Romania	95	172	38	38	18	472	343	8	152
United Kingdom	146	197	91	73	52	713	507	11	342
Other	24	9	3	10	61	6,090	45	1	176
Total	978	1,250	1,040	1,280	644	501	4,550	100	2,350

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

²Cost, insurance, and freight values at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH¹

(Metric tons)

Period	Production	Exports	Imports	Net stock		Apparent consumption ²
				Increase	Decrease	
2018:						
January–December	11,900,000	6,960,000	16,300	3,910	--	4,940,000
January–April	3,920,000	2,350,000	5,310	-- ^r	26,100 ^r	1,600,000 ^r
April	966,000	588,000	1,540	27,700	--	352,000
May	952,000	544,000	1,420	--	8,440	417,000
June	961,000	512,000	1,230	--	10,400	461,000
July	1,070,000	609,000	1,560	34,000	--	428,000
August	930,000	542,000	1,020	10,600	--	378,000
September	988,000	529,000	1,500	--	24,700	485,000
October	1,010,000	670,000	1,940	--	31,800	376,000
November	997,000	506,000	1,720	72,500	--	420,000
December	1,060,000	698,000	627	--	11,700	374,000
2019:						
January–April	3,860,000	2,280,000	4,550	39,400	--	1,550,000
January	1,000,000	587,000	978	2,640	--	415,000
February	920,000	621,000	1,250	--	30,500	331,000
March	941,000	508,000	1,040	6,870 ^r	--	427,000
April	999,000	562,000	1,280	60,300	--	378,000

^rRevised. -- Zero.

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

²Production plus imports minus exports plus or minus stock changes.

TABLE 5
REPORTED CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH IN THE UNITED STATES, BY END USE, BY QUARTER¹

(Thousand metric tons)

NAICS ² code	End use	2018					2019
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter– 4th quarter	1st quarter
3272	Glass:						
327213	Container	279	284	257	233	1,050	250
327211	Flat	222	243	240	256	960	228
327993	Fiber	39	40	43	42	165	39
327212	Other	26	25	25	26	102	27
	Total	566	591	565	557	2,280	545
32518	Chemicals	338	369	356	372	1,440	335
325611	Soaps and detergents	79	66	72	70	287	69
322	Pulp and paper	12	13	11	11	47	10
221310	Water treatment ³	11	12	12	9	44	10
56221	Flue gas desulfurization	47	43	52	49	191	47
4246	Distributors	79	74	75	74	302	71
	Other	71	69	65	59	265	84
	Total domestic consumption ⁴	1,200	1,240	1,210	1,200	4,850	1,170
	Exports ⁵	1,750	1,590	1,720	1,760	6,820	1,300
	Canada	47	49	47	48	190	40
	Total industry sales ⁶	2,950	2,830	2,930	2,960	11,700	2,470
	Total sales from plants	3,010	2,860	3,020	3,030	11,900	2,890
	Total production	2,960	2,880	2,990	3,020	11,800	2,860

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

²North American Industry Classification System.

³Includes soda ash equivalent from soda liquors and purge liquors sold to power plants for water treatment. Sales of mine water are excluded.

⁴Imports reported by the producer/importer have been distributed into appropriate end-use categories listed above.

⁵As reported by producers; includes Canada. Data may not necessarily agree with those reported by the U.S. Census Bureau for the same periods.

⁶Represents soda ash from domestic origin (production and inventory changes) and imports and exports. Includes soda ash sold by coproducers and distributed by purchasers into appropriate end-use categories.