

Mineral Industry Surveys

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U.S. PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES IN THE FOURTH QUARTER 2009

U.S. mine and plant production data for selected mineral commodities are provided monthly (or quarterly) by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System (FRS), for use in preparing its index of industrial production and the related capacity indexes and capacity utilization rates. These measures cover manufacturing, mining, and electric and gas utilities, and they are among the key economic indicators monitored by the FRS in determining monetary policy. The data in this report include current and prior months' data provided to the FRS, some of which have been revised.

Mineral commodity production generally declined in the fourth quarter of 2009 compared with that of the third quarter of 2009. Decreases in domestic production for construction materials (cement, construction sand and gravel, crushed stone, and gypsum) were large compared with those of the third quarter of 2009 (table 1) but partly seasonal. The decline in phosphate rock production partly reflects a seasonal downturn in

fertilizer production as well. Iron ore production increased by 62% in the fourth quarter of 2009 compared with that of the third quarter of 2009 owing mainly to a restocking of inventories and an upturn in raw steel production for the second consecutive quarter. There were across-the-board decreases in selected mineral production in 2009 compared with production in the same period of 2008 owing to general conditions in the U.S. economy. The U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2010) reported that privately owned housing starts in 2009 were 28% below those in 2008.

Reference Cited

U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2010, New residential construction—Quarterly starts by purpose and design: Washington, DC, U.S. Department of Commerce, 10 p. (Accessed February 18, 2010, at http://www.census.gov/const/www/quarterly_stats_completions.pdf.)

Mineral commodity	Percentage change, fourth quarter 2009 vs third quarter 2009 ¹	Percentage change, 2009 total vs 2008 total
Aluminum (secondary)	--	-21
Cement	-24	-24
Gypsum	-14	-25
Iron ore	62	-50
Phosphate rock	-21	-12
Sand and gravel, construction	-32	-26
Soda ash	2	-17
Stone, crushed	-28	-24
Zinc	8	-3

-- Zero.

¹Percentage change based on unrounded numbers.

TABLE 1
U.S. PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES, BY QUARTER^{1,2}

Mineral commodity	2008				2009				Year total	
	First	Second	Third	Fourth	First	Second	Third	Fourth	2008	2009
	quarter	quarter	quarter	quarter	quarter	quarter	quarter	quarter		
Aluminum ³ thousand metric tons	244	215 ^r	228	202	191 ^r	170 ^r	170 ^r	171	889 ^r	703
Cement ⁴ million metric tons	17.2 ^r	24.0	24.5	18.9	13.1	17.7	19.0 ^r	14.4 ^e	84.5	64.2 ^e
Gypsum ⁵ do.	4.8	4.7	4.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.4	2.9 ^e	17.9	13.3 ^e
Iron ore ⁶ do.	12.9	13.9	14.1	12.0	7.9	3.4	5.8	9.4	53.0	26.5
Phosphate rock ⁷ do.	7.8	7.6	7.9	6.7	6.1	6.8	7.6	6.0 ^e	30.0	26.5 ^e
Sand and gravel, construction ^{8,9} do.	196 ^r	300 ^r	318 ^r	226 ^r	137	210 ^r	250 ^r	169 ^e	1,040 ^r	766 ^e
Soda ash ⁶ do.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.5	11.3	9.3
Stone, crushed ^{8,9} do.	285 ^r	413 ^r	420 ^r	320 ^r	213 ^r	304 ^r	335 ^r	240 ^e	1,440 ^r	1,090 ^e
Zinc ¹⁰ thousand metric tons	196	193	189	170	179	173 ^r	180 ^r	195 ^e	748	726 ^e

^eEstimated. ^rRevised. do. Ditto.

¹Based on data available as of February 17, 2010.

²Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

³Aluminum alloys produced at secondary smelters in the United States.

⁴Portland and blended cement shipments.

⁵Calcined production.

⁶Mine production.

⁷Marketable mine production.

⁸Sold or used.

⁹Excludes Alaska and Hawaii; included in "Year total."

¹⁰Recoverable mine production.