

Mineral Industry Surveys

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U.S. PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES IN THE FOURTH QUARTER 2010

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.

In the fourth quarter of 2010, domestic production for construction materials (cement, construction sand and gravel, crushed stone, and gypsum) decreased compared with that of the third quarter of 2010 (table 1). Production of iron ore in 2010 increased 87% compared with that of 2009 because of generally improved economic conditions in 2010 and unusually low production in 2009 resulting from mine shutdowns and drawdown of inventories. Production of soda ash, used mainly in glass, chemicals, and soap and detergents, experienced an

11% year-on-year increase owing to an upturn in the global economy. Decreases in production for some mineral commodities in 2010 compared with production in 2009 may be attributed to decreases in construction spending, which declined 10.3% for the year compared with that of 2009 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). The U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2011) reported that privately owned housing starts for 2010 were 2.6% above those for 2009.

References Cited

U.S. Census Bureau, 2011, December 2010 construction at \$787.9 billion annual rate: Washington, DC, U.S. Department of Commerce, February 1, 5 p. (Accessed February 10, 2011, at <http://www.census.gov/const/C30/release.pdf>.)
 U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2011, New residential construction in December 2010: Washington, DC, U.S. Department of Commerce, January 19, 6 p. (Accessed February 10, 2011, at <http://www.census.gov/const/newresconst.pdf>.)

Mineral commodity	Percentage change, fourth quarter 2010	Percentage change, 2010 total vs. 2009 total ¹
	vs. third quarter 2010 ¹	
Aluminum (secondary)	1	-5
Cement	-17	--
Gypsum	-11	-9
Iron ore	2	87
Phosphate rock	-1	-3
Sand and gravel, construction	-25	-3
Soda ash	4	11
Stone, crushed	-24	--
Zinc	-11	--

-- Zero.

¹Percentage change based on unrounded numbers.

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

Mineral commodity	2009				2010				January-December	
	First	Second	Third	Fourth	First	Second	Third	Fourth	2009	2010
	quarter	quarter	quarter	quarter	quarter	quarter	quarter	quarter		
Aluminum ³ thousand metric tons	182	162	162	163	158	156 ^r	161 ^r	163 ^e	668	637 ^e
Cement ⁴ million metric tons	13.2	17.8	19.1	14.4	11.3	18.3	19.0	15.8 ^e	64.4	64.5 ^e
Gypsum ⁵ do.	3.7	3.3	3.4	3.0	3.2	3.3	3.0	2.7 ^e	13.4	12.2 ^e
Iron ore ⁶ do.	7.9	3.4	5.8	9.4	9.9	12.0	13.6	13.9 ^e	26.5	49.5 ^e
Phosphate rock ⁷ do.	6.1	6.8	7.6	6.0	6.3	6.9	6.3	6.2 ^e	26.5	25.7 ^e
Sand and gravel, construction ⁸ do.	150 ^r	228 ^r	265 ^r	198 ^r	132 ^r	232 ^r	258 ^r	193	840	814
Soda ash ⁶ do.	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.7	9.3	10.4
Stone, crushed ⁸ do.	211 ^r	319 ^r	361 ^r	276 ^r	187 ^r	338 ^r	365 ^r	277	1,170	1,170
Zinc ⁹ thousand metric tons	179	173	181	178	179	181	186 ^r	166 ^e	710	712 ^e

^eEstimated. ^rRevised. do. Ditto.

¹Based on data available as of February 10, 2011.

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.

⁴Data are shipments of domestically produced portland and blended cement, including cement made from imported clinker, as a proxy for actual domestic cement production.

⁵Calcined production.

⁶Mine production.

⁷Marketable mine production.

⁸Sold or used.

⁹Recoverable mine production.