

# Mineral Industry Surveys

**For information, contact:**

Deborah A. Kramer, Acting Chief, Mineral Commodities Section  
 National Minerals Information Center  
 U.S. Geological Survey  
 989 National Center  
 Reston, VA 20192  
 Telephone: (703) 648-7719  
 E-mail: dkramer@usgs.gov

Joseph M. Krisanda (Data)  
 Telephone: (703) 648-7946  
 Fax: (703) 648-7975  
 E-mail: jkrisand@usgs.gov

**Internet:** <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals>

## U.S. PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES IN THE FIRST QUARTER 2012

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 for guidance in determining national monetary policy. The data in this report include current and prior months' data provided to the FRS, some of which have been revised.

Decreases in domestic production for construction materials (cement, construction sand and gravel, and crushed stone) were substantial compared with production of the fourth quarter of 2011 (table 1) but partly seasonal. The increase in construction materials production compared with production in the first quarter of 2011 reflects the unusually warm winter weather in the eastern half of the United States. Total construction spending during the first quarter of 2012 was 6.7% more than

that in the corresponding period of 2011 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). The U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2012) reported that privately owned housing starts in the first quarter of 2012 were 19.2% higher than those in the first quarter of 2011.

The 10% decline in phosphate rock production in the first quarter of 2012 compared with the first quarter of 2011 was because the leading producers reduced production of phosphate fertilizers because of a decrease in demand.

### References Cited

- U.S. Census Bureau, 2012, March 2012 construction at \$808.1 billion annual rate: Washington, DC, U.S. Department of Commerce, May 1, 5 p. (Accessed May 14, 2012, at <http://www.census.gov/construction/c30/pdf/release.pdf>.)
- U.S. Census Bureau and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2012, New residential construction in March 2012: Washington, DC, U.S. Department of Commerce, April 17, 6 p. (Accessed May 14, 2012, at <http://www.census.gov/construction/nrc/pdf/newresconst.pdf>.)

Mineral commodity	Percentage change, first quarter 2012	Percentage change, first quarter 2012
	vs. fourth quarter 2011 <sup>1</sup>	vs. first quarter 2011 <sup>1</sup>
Aluminum (secondary)	-4	6
Cement	-16	21
Gypsum	2	-2
Iron ore	-7	3
Phosphate rock	-9	-10
Sand and gravel, construction	-32	2
Soda ash	-2	5
Stone, crushed	-26	6
Zinc	-2	-4

<sup>1</sup>Percentage change based on unrounded data.

TABLE 1  
U.S. PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES, BY QUARTER<sup>1,2</sup>

Mineral commodity		2011					1st quarter- 4th quarter	2012 1st quarter	1st quarter	
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	2011			2012	
		Aluminum <sup>3</sup>	thousand metric tons	199 <sup>r</sup>	219 <sup>r</sup>	236 <sup>r</sup>	219 <sup>r</sup>	872 <sup>r</sup>	211	199 <sup>r</sup>
Cement <sup>4</sup>	million metric tons	11.8	17.8 <sup>r</sup>	20.1 <sup>r</sup>	16.9	66.5 <sup>r</sup>	14.2 <sup>e</sup>	11.8	14.2 <sup>e</sup>	
Gypsum <sup>5</sup>	do.	3.1	2.9	3.0	2.9	11.9	3.0	3.1	3.0	
Iron ore <sup>6</sup>	do.	12.4	13.7	13.9	13.7	53.6	12.7 <sup>e</sup>	12.4	12.7 <sup>e</sup>	
Phosphate rock <sup>7</sup>	do.	7.0	6.8	7.4	6.9	28.1	6.3 <sup>e</sup>	7.0	6.3 <sup>e</sup>	
Sand and gravel, construction <sup>8</sup>	do.	126 <sup>r</sup>	225 <sup>r</sup>	254 <sup>r</sup>	190 <sup>r</sup>	795 <sup>r</sup>	129 <sup>e</sup>	126 <sup>r</sup>	129 <sup>e</sup>	
Soda ash <sup>6</sup>	do.	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.8	10.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	
Stone, crushed <sup>8</sup>	do.	197	311	349 <sup>r</sup>	281 <sup>r</sup>	1,140 <sup>r</sup>	209 <sup>e</sup>	197	209 <sup>e</sup>	
Zinc <sup>9</sup>	thousand metric tons	186	184	194	182	744	178 <sup>e</sup>	186	178 <sup>e</sup>	

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. <sup>r</sup>Revised. do. Ditto.

<sup>1</sup>Based on data available as of May 10, 2012.

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

<sup>3</sup>Aluminum alloys produced at secondary smelters in the United States, less primary aluminum consumed, primary silicon consumed, and other alloying ingredients consumed.

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

<sup>5</sup>Calcined production.

<sup>6</sup>Mine production.

<sup>7</sup>Marketable mine production.

<sup>8</sup>Sold or used; quarterly survey based on sample survey.

<sup>9</sup>Recoverable mine production.