

Mineral Industry Surveys

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U.S. PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES IN THE FIRST QUARTER 2013

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.

Domestic production levels for construction materials (cement, construction sand and gravel, crushed stone, and gypsum) in the first quarter of 2013 decreased substantially compared with levels in the fourth quarter of 2012 (table 1) owing to seasonal fluctuations that are influenced by weather conditions. The decreases were typical of those seen during the first quarter of most years. When comparing first quarter production of 2013 to that of 2012, production for these mineral commodities averaged slightly lower.

For other mineral commodities listed, numerous factors can influence production. This makes it difficult to explain short-term changes in production levels.

TABLE 1
PRODUCTION TRENDS FOR SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES

Mineral commodity	Percentage change, 1st quarter 2013 vs. 4th quarter 2012 ¹	Percentage change, 1st quarter 2013 vs. 1st quarter 2012 ¹
Aluminum (secondary)	1	-6
Cement	-21	(2)
Copper	-7	9
Gold	-11	-6
Gypsum	-14	-4
Iron ore	-11	-2
Lead	-7	-5
Molybdenum	-2	-11
Phosphate rock	6	22
Sand and gravel, construction	-32	-1
Silver	-1	10
Soda ash	-4	2
Stone, crushed	-25	-4
Zinc	-7	(2)

¹Percentage change based on unrounded data.

²Less than 0.5%.

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

Mineral commodity		2012					1st quarter- 4th quarter	2013 1st quarter	1st quarter	
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	2012			2013	
		Aluminum ³	thousand metric tons	210	213	197	195 ^r	814 ^r	196	210
Cement ⁴	million metric tons	14.2	20.1	20.6 ^r	17.9 ^r	72.8 ^r	14.2	14.2	14.2	
Copper ⁵	thousand metric tons	277	277	290	323	1,170	301	277	301	
Gold ⁵	metric tons	56.6 ^r	57.0 ^r	58.9 ^r	59.4 ^r	232 ^r	53.1	56.6	53.1	
Gypsum ⁶	million metric tons	3.0	3.1	3.4	3.3 ^r	12.8 ^r	2.9 ^e	3.0	2.9 ^e	
Iron ore ⁷	do.	12.7	12.6	12.9	14.0	52.2 ^r	12.5	12.7	12.5	
Lead ⁵	thousand metric tons	83.6	83.0	84.7	84.6 ^r	336	79.0	83.6	79.0	
Molybdenum ⁵	do.	15.0	13.9	13.5	13.7	56.1	13.4 ^e	15.0	13.4 ^e	
Phosphate rock ⁸	million metric tons	6.5	7.9	8.3	7.4	30.1	7.8	6.5	7.8	
Sand and gravel, construction ¹⁰	do.	142 ^r	236 ^r	254 ^r	206 ^r	839 ^r	141	142 ^r	141	
Silver ⁵	metric tons	247	254	255 ^r	275 ^r	1,030	272	247	272	
Soda ash ⁷	million metric tons	2.7	2.6	2.8	2.9	11.1	2.8	2.7	2.8	
Stone, crushed ⁹	do.	220 ^r	320 ^r	338 ^r	281 ^r	1,160 ^r	211	220 ^r	211	
Zinc ⁵	thousand metric tons	174	175	176	189	713 ^r	175	174	175	

^eEstimated. ^rRevised. do. Ditto.

¹Based on data available as of June 3, 2013.

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, less primary aluminum consumed, primary silicon consumed, and other alloying ingredients consumed.

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

⁵Recoverable mine production.

⁶Calcined production.

⁷Mine production.

⁸Marketable mine production.

⁹Sold or used; quarterly survey based on sample survey.