

Mineral Industry Surveys

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U.S. PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES IN THE FIRST QUARTER 2014

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 2014 decreased substantially

compared with levels in the fourth quarter of 2013 (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. Production for these mineral commodities in the first quarter of 2014 was about 4% greater than during the first quarter of 2013.

First quarter 2014 production for the reported nonferrous minerals (aluminum, copper, lead, and zinc) and for reported precious metals (gold and silver) increased by about 12% and 4%, respectively, from those in the first quarter of 2013. For these and other mineral commodities listed, numerous factors can influence production, making it difficult to generalize short-term changes in production levels.

TABLE 1
PRODUCTION TRENDS FOR SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES

Mineral commodity	Percentage change, 1st quarter 2014 vs. 4th quarter 2013 ¹	Percentage change, 1st quarter 2014 vs. 1st quarter 2013 ¹
Aluminum (secondary)	-4	4
Cement	-23	4
Copper	3	13
Gold	-8	-2
Gypsum	-25	3
Iron ore	-10	-6
Lead	4	9
Molybdenum	-2	-11
Phosphate rock	-3	-12
Sand and gravel, construction	-33	4
Silver	8	5
Soda ash	(2)	4
Stone, crushed	-24	4
Zinc	(2)	19

¹Percentage change based on unrounded data.

²Less than ½ unit.

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

Mineral commodity		2013						2014	
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter- 4th quarter	1st quarter	1st quarter	
							2013	2014	
Aluminum ³	thousand metric tons	196	202	214	213 ^r	825 ^r	204 ^e	196	204 ^e
Cement ⁴	million metric tons	14.0	20.1	22.7	18.8 ^r	75.6 ^r	14.5 ^e	14.0	14.5 ^e
Copper ⁵	thousand metric tons	302	299	316	331 ^r	1,250 ^r	341	302	341
Gold ⁵	metric tons	54.6	56.5 ^r	59.1 ^r	58.1 ^r	228 ^r	53.7	54.6	53.7
Gypsum ⁶	million metric tons	2.9	3.4	3.6	4.0 ^r	13.9 ^r	3.0 ^e	2.9	3.0 ^e
Iron ore ⁷	do.	12.5	11.7	13.8	13.0	51.0	11.7 ^e	12.5	11.7 ^e
Lead ⁵	thousand metric tons	78.2	85.0	85.4	82.2 ^r	331	85.5	78.2	85.5
Molybdenum ⁵	do.	16.0 ^r	15.3 ^r	15.1	14.4 ^r	60.8 ^r	14.2	16.0	14.2
Phosphate rock ⁸	million metric tons	7.9	8.4	7.8 ^r	7.1	30.1 ^r	6.9 ^e	7.9	6.9 ^e
Sand and gravel, construction ⁹	do.	135 ^r	229 ^r	272 ^r	212 ^r	848 ^r	141 ^e	135	141 ^e
Silver ⁵	metric tons	261	271	260 ^r	254 ^r	1,050 ^r	274	261	274
Soda ash ⁷	million metric tons	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	11.5 ^r	2.9	2.8	2.9
Stone, crushed ⁹	do.	212 ^r	321 ^r	362 ^r	292 ^r	1,190 ^r	221 ^e	212	221 ^e
Zinc ⁵	thousand metric tons	174	191	190	206	762	207	174	207

^eEstimated. ^rRevised. do. Ditto.

¹Based on data available as of May 12, 2014.

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.