

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN MAY 2004

Natural soda ash production in May was 935,000 metric tons (t), 2% higher than the previous month's production, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. Ending inventories were 299,000 t, 6% higher than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in May was 1.34 million tons. Total production of chemical caustic soda was withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

Apparent consumption of soda ash in April was 494,000 t, 10% lower than the April 2003 level of 551,000 t. Exports and

imports of soda ash in April 2004 were 403,000 t and 332 t, respectively.

The trends in cumulative soda ash statistics through April 2004, compared with those of April 2003, were as follows: production was 3% higher, imports 24% lower, exports 12% higher, ending stocks 20% higher, and apparent consumption slightly lower.

TABLE 1
SALIENT SODA ASH STATISTICS¹

(Thousand metric tons)

| Period | Soda ash | | Wyoming trona production |
|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Production ² | Ending stocks | |
| 2003: | | | |
| April | 872 | 234 | 1,320 |
| May | 926 | 298 | 1,340 |
| June | 878 | 255 | 1,110 |
| July | 923 | 297 | 1,110 |
| August | 888 | 323 | 1,110 |
| September | 869 | 286 | 1,300 |
| October | 913 | 291 | 1,390 |
| November | 860 | 309 | 1,250 |
| December | 925 | 330 | 1,450 |
| Total (January-May) | 4,380 | XX | 6,780 |
| Year total | 10,600 | XX | 15,500 |
| 2004: | | | |
| January | 857 | 331 | 1,310 |
| February | 852 | 291 | 1,330 |
| March | 937 | 264 | 1,500 |
| April | 913 | 281 | 1,430 |
| May | 935 | 299 | 1,340 |
| Total | 4,490 | XX | 6,920 |

XX Not applicable.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Production data includes soda ash equivalent from soda liquors only.

Soda ash equivalent from mine water is not included. Soda liquors are withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

TABLE 2
U.S. EXPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY, IN APRIL 2004^{1, 2}

| Country | Quantity (metric tons) | Value ³ (thousands) | Unit value |
|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Mexico | 54,400 | \$6,610 | \$121 |
| Japan | 45,900 | 4,380 | 95 |
| Brazil | 39,600 | 5,200 | 131 |
| Canada | 30,700 | 2,360 | 77 |
| Chile | 30,600 | 3,790 | 124 |
| Taiwan | 29,300 | 2,980 | 102 |
| Venezuela | 24,100 | 3,300 | 137 |
| Indonesia | 22,600 | 2,330 | 103 |
| Korea, Republic of | 20,900 | 1,970 | 94 |
| Australia | 15,500 | 1,730 | 112 |
| Other | 89,100 | 10,300 | 116 |
| Total or average | 403,000 | 45,000 | 112 |

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²May 2004 data were not available at time of publication.

³Free alongside ship value at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3
U.S. EXPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY, IN 2004^{1, 2}

(Metric tons)

| Country | January | February | March | April | Total | % of total |
|----------------------|---------|----------|---------|---------|-----------|------------|
| Argentina | 20,500 | 19,600 | 31,500 | -- | 71,600 | 4 |
| Australia | -- | 15,500 | 7,500 | 15,500 | 38,500 | 2 |
| Belgium | 21,200 | 10,000 | 38,400 | 9,670 | 79,300 | 5 |
| Brazil | 15,000 | 28,200 | 8,550 | 39,600 | 91,300 | 6 |
| Canada | 28,100 | 28,800 | 37,500 | 30,700 | 125,000 | 8 |
| Chile | 409 | 30,700 | 11,200 | 30,600 | 72,900 | 5 |
| China | 23,000 | 31,400 | 22,900 | 5,000 | 82,300 | 5 |
| Colombia | 9,340 | 11,000 | 20,200 | 11,100 | 51,600 | 3 |
| Costa Rica | -- | 2,000 | -- | 2,000 | 4,000 | (3) |
| Dominican Republic | -- | -- | 27 | 36 | 63 | (3) |
| Ecuador | 5,310 | -- | -- | -- | 5,310 | (3) |
| Finland | -- | -- | -- | 34 | 34 | (3) |
| France | 6,940 | 21,000 | 7,540 | -- | 35,500 | 2 |
| Germany | 347 | -- | 578 | -- | 925 | (3) |
| Guatemala | -- | 5 | -- | 2,500 | 2,510 | (3) |
| Indonesia | 42,300 | -- | 38,800 | 22,600 | 104,000 | 6 |
| Ireland | -- | 40 | -- | -- | 40 | (3) |
| Italy | 31 | -- | -- | -- | 31 | (3) |
| Japan | 37,900 | 56,900 | 8,500 | 45,900 | 149,000 | 9 |
| Korea, Republic of | 18,100 | 16,900 | 19,000 | 20,900 | 74,900 | 5 |
| Malaysia | -- | 8,000 | 16,500 | 8,000 | 32,500 | 2 |
| Mexico | 36,800 | 46,800 | 46,900 | 54,400 | 185,000 | 11 |
| Netherlands | 6,020 | 9,470 | 10,100 | -- | 25,600 | 2 |
| New Zealand | 6,600 | 5,000 | -- | 6,000 | 17,600 | 1 |
| Peru | 1,580 | 3,900 | -- | 2,500 | 7,980 | (3) |
| Philippines | 7,500 | -- | 12,000 | -- | 19,500 | 1 |
| Portugal | -- | -- | 9,500 | -- | 9,500 | 1 |
| Russia | 3 | -- | 158 | -- | 161 | (3) |
| Saudi Arabia | -- | 20,000 | 16,000 | -- | 36,000 | 2 |
| South Africa | 6,500 | -- | -- | 9,500 | 16,000 | 1 |
| Spain | 49 | 14,700 | 5,090 | 15,100 | 34,900 | 2 |
| Taiwan | 11,000 | 45,800 | -- | 29,300 | 86,100 | 5 |
| Thailand | 19,000 | 16,200 | 14,900 | 10,000 | 60,100 | 4 |
| United Arab Emirates | -- | 8,000 | 8,000 | -- | 16,000 | 1 |
| United Kingdom | -- | -- | 24 | 7,700 | 7,720 | (3) |
| Venezuela | 366 | 16,700 | 31,300 | 24,100 | 72,400 | 4 |
| Total | 324,000 | 467,000 | 423,000 | 403,000 | 1,620,000 | 100 |

-- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²May 2004 data were not available at time of publication.

³Less than 1/2 unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH^{1,2}

| Period | Quantity (metric tons) | Value ³ (thousands) |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2003: | | |
| April | 784 | \$145 |
| May | 662 | 165 |
| June | 138 | 78 |
| July | 380 | 134 |
| August | 263 | 78 |
| September | 266 | 104 |
| October | 331 | 103 |
| November | 435 | 126 |
| December | 543 | 144 |
| Total (January-April) | 2,310 | 578 |
| Year total | 5,330 | 1,510 |
| 2004: | | |
| January | 511 | 155 |
| February | 470 | 123 |
| March | 438 | 141 |
| April | 332 | 137 |
| Total | 1,750 | 555 |

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²May 2004 data were not available at time of publication.

³Cost, insurance, and freight value at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
U.S. APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH¹

(Metric tons)

| Period | Production | Imports | Exports | Net stock | | Apparent consumption ² |
|-----------------------|------------|---------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| | | | | Increase | Decrease | |
| 2003: | | | | | | |
| April | 872,000 | 784 | 350,000 | -- | 28,300 | 551,000 |
| May | 926,000 | 662 | 340,000 | 63,900 | -- | 523,000 |
| June | 878,000 | 138 | 374,000 | -- | 43,300 | 547,000 |
| July | 923,000 | 380 | 356,000 | 41,700 | -- | 526,000 |
| August | 888,000 | 263 | 422,000 | 26,000 | -- | 440,000 |
| September | 869,000 | 266 | 385,000 | -- | 36,800 | 522,000 |
| October | 913,000 | 331 | 295,000 | 4,910 | -- | 613,000 |
| November | 860,000 | 435 | 404,000 | 18,000 | -- | 439,000 |
| December | 925,000 | 543 | 426,000 | 21,300 | -- | 478,000 |
| Total (January-April) | 3,460,000 | 2,310 | 1,450,000 | 12,600 | -- | 2,000,000 |
| Year total | 10,600,000 | 5,330 | 4,450,000 | 108,000 | -- | 6,090,000 |
| 2004: | | | | | | |
| January | 857,000 | 511 | 324,000 | 660 | -- | 533,000 |
| February | 852,000 | 470 | 467,000 | -- | 40,200 | 426,000 |
| March | 937,000 | 438 | 423,000 | -- | 26,900 | 541,000 |
| April | 913,000 | 332 | 403,000 | 16,800 | -- | 494,000 |
| May | 935,000 | NA | NA | 18,700 | -- | NA |
| January-April | 3,560,000 | 1,750 | 1,620,000 | -- | 49,500 | 1,990,000 |

NA Not available. -- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Production plus imports minus exports plus or minus stock changes.