

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN APRIL 2016

U.S. natural soda ash production in April was 955,000 metric tons (t), a 5% decrease from the previous month's production and 3% less than that of April 2015 (table 1).

Ending inventories for April 2016 were 301,000 t, 4% less than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in April 2016 was 1.45 million metric tons (Mt), 17% more than that of March 2016 and 4% more than that of April 2015.

Exports and imports of soda ash in March 2016 were 537,000 t and 4,710 t, respectively.

The changes in soda ash statistics for March 2016, compared with those of March 2015, were as follows: production was about the same, exports were 5% lower, imports were 30% higher, and apparent consumption was 4% higher. Soda ash import tonnages can differ widely from month to month, but generally are much smaller than soda ash export tonnages.

Table 5 provides U.S. consumption statistics of domestically produced soda ash for the first quarter of 2016. Total consumption increased by 7% compared with that in the first

quarter of 2015. During the first quarter of 2016, 634,000 t (50%) went to glassmaking and 361,000 t (28%) was consumed for chemicals. Consumption increased in every glass end use segment except "other", which decreased by 6% compared with that in the first quarter of 2015. Overall glass consumption increased by 14% with consumption for fiberglass increasing by 21% compared with the first quarter of 2015. Consumption for pulp and paper decreased by 13% and for soaps and detergents decreased by 5%.

All percentages in this report were calculated using unrounded data.

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TABLE 1
SALIENT SODA ASH STATISTICS¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Soda ash		Wyoming trona production
	Production ²	Stocks, end of period	
2015: ^p			
January–April	3,920	283	6,010 ^r
April	983	283	1,400
May	920	342	1,440
June	980	292	1,500
July	1,010	307	1,510
August	971	284	1,480
September	915	278	1,460
October	927	295	1,280
November	973	348	1,510
December	952	285	1,450
January–December	11,600	285	17,600
2016:			
January	956	325	1,570
February	909	309	1,460
March	1,010	315	1,240
April	955	301	1,450
January–April	3,830	301	5,730

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised.

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

²Production data include 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 2016^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	Quantity	March		January–March		
				Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
Argentina	13,100	62	24,000	\$5,140	\$215	37,200	2	\$8,020
Australia	--	31,900	--	--	--	31,900	2	5,050
Brazil	92,200	71,700	52,500	10,200	194	216,000	14	43,800
Canada	17,300	21,900	19,200	3,810	198	58,500	4	11,000
Chile	9,180	36,200	37,200	7,920	213	82,500	5	17,600
China	41	41	35,000	4,280	122	35,100	2	4,300
Colombia	5,000	16,900	--	--	--	21,900	1	4,220
EL Salvador	--	6,000	--	--	--	6,000	(4)	1,220
France	5,940	--	9,000	1,490	165	14,900	1	2,440
Guatemala	--	6,320	--	--	--	6,320	(4)	1,370
Indonesia	52,700	61,500	31,700	5,890	185	146,000	9	27,200
Japan	30,500	14,100	39,000	7,060	181	83,600	5	14,300
Korea, Republic of	24,600	21,600	6,000	1,200	201	52,100	3	9,490
Malaysia	16,100	11,000	--	--	--	27,100	2	5,500
Mexico	96,800	91,900	74,400	17,000	229	263,000	17	60,600
Netherlands	16,100	--	19,200	3,050	159	35,300	2	5,570
New Zealand	--	7,000	--	--	--	7,000	(4)	1,350
Philippines	6,700	12,000	--	--	--	18,700	1	3,540
Saudi Arabia	1,210	17,500	18,500	3,120	169	37,200	2	6,140
South Africa	12,500	7,480	--	--	--	20,000	1	3,380
Taiwan	6,950	26,400	--	--	--	33,400	2	5,820
Thailand	29,000	23,300	37,100	6,490	175	89,400	6	16,400
United Arab Emirates	15	6,500	12,000	2,020	168	18,500	1	3,090
United Kingdom	20,100	20,000	24,000	4,870	203	64,100	4	12,300
Venezuela	--	8,890	--	--	--	8,890	1	2,110
Vietnam	26,500	14,400	11,000	2,190	199	51,900	3	9,970
Other	832	12,700	87,000	14,900	172	100,000	6	17,600
Total	483,000	547,000	537,000	101,000	188	1,570,000	100	304,000

-- Zero.

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

²April 2016 data were not available at time of publication.

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

⁴Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY, IN 2016^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	Quantity	March		Quantity	January–March	
				Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value		Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
China	7	144	3	\$31	\$10,300	154	2	\$43
France	153	--	--	--	--	153	2	69
Germany	632	2,080	2,330	348	149	5,050	51	756
Italy	--	571	1,370	300	219	1,940	20	447
Taiwan	117	--	--	--	--	117	1	17
Turkey	8	95	245	64	261	348	4	81
United Kingdom	513	752	705	107	152	1,970	20	330
Other	8	23	60	3	50	91	(4)	71
Total	1,440	3,670	4,710	853	181	9,820	100	1,810

-- Zero.

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

²April 2016 data were not available at time of publication.

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

⁴Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH¹

(Metric tons)

Period	Production	Exports	Imports	Net stock		Apparent consumption ²
				Increase	Decrease	
2015:						
January–December	11,600,000	6,390,000	39,800	14,600	--	5,200,000
January–March	2,940,000	1,630,000	9,130	90,200	--	1,230,000
March	1,010,000	565,000	3,630	--	4,080	453,000
April	983,000	629,000	3,370	--	78,100	435,000
May	920,000	447,000	3,610	59,500	--	417,000
June	980,000	527,000	5,030	--	50,500	509,000
July	1,010,000	624,000	4,980	15,200	--	371,000
August	971,000	514,000	3,490	--	22,400	483,000
September	915,000	481,000	2,340	--	6,790	443,000
October	927,000	458,000	3,830	17,600	--	455,000
November	973,000	507,000	1,800	52,600	--	415,000
December	952,000	571,000	2,280	--	62,700	446,000
2016:						
January–March	2,870,000	1,570,000	9,820	29,700	--	1,290,000
January	956,000	483,000	1,440	40,300	--	434,000
February	909,000	547,000	3,670	--	15,600	381,000
March	1,010,000	537,000	4,710	5,020	--	472,000
April	955,000	NA	NA	--	14,000	NA

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.

TABLE 5
REPORTED CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH IN THE UNITED STATES, BY END USE, BY QUARTER¹

(Thousand metric tons)

NAICS ² code	End use	2015					2016
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter– 4th quarter	1st quarter
3272	Glass:						
327213	Container	265	296	294	282	1,140	312
327211	Flat	225	248	251	246	970	249
327993	Fiber	34	36	39	41	150	41
327212	Other	34	35	31	34	134	32
	Total	558	616	615	603	2,390	634
32518	Chemicals	351	382	368	391	1,490	361
325611	Soaps and detergents	83	77	84	84	328	79
322	Pulp and paper	15	17	14	13	59	13
221310	Water treatment ³	17	15	17	16	65	18
56221	Flue gas desulfurization	49	55	66	51	221	48
422	Distributors	74	71	73	68	286	76
	Other	44	40	30	28	142	43
	Total domestic consumption ⁴	1,190	1,270	1,270	1,250	4,990	1,270
	Exports ⁵	1,640	1,660	1,560	1,590	6,440	1,560
	Canada	58	59	57	56	230	42
	Total industry sales ⁶	2,830	2,930	2,820	2,840	11,400	2,840
	Total sales from plants	2,870	2,940	2,900	2,850	11,600	2,850
	Total production	2,940	2,880	2,890	2,850	11,600	2,870

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

²North American Industry Classification System.

³Includes soda ash equivalent from soda liquors and purge liquors sold to powerplants for water treatment. Sales of mine water are excluded.

⁴Imports reported by the producer/importer have been distributed into appropriate end-use categories listed above.

⁵As reported by producers; includes Canada. Data may not necessarily agree with those reported by the U.S. Census Bureau for the same periods.

⁶Represents soda ash from domestic origin (production and inventory changes) and imports and exports. Includes soda ash sold by coproducers and distributed by purchasers into appropriate end-use categories.