

# Mineral Industry Surveys

---

**For information, contact:**

Wallace P. Bolen, Soda Ash Commodity Specialist  
National Minerals Information Center  
U.S. Geological Survey  
989 National Center  
Reston, VA 20192  
Telephone: (703) 648-7727, Fax: (703) 648-7757  
Email: [wbolen@usgs.gov](mailto:wbolen@usgs.gov)

Chanda C. Williams (Data)  
Telephone: (703) 648-7957  
Fax: (703) 648-7975  
Email: [chandawilliams@usgs.gov](mailto:chandawilliams@usgs.gov)

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

## SODA ASH IN OCTOBER 2017

U.S. natural soda ash production in October was 1.04 million metric tons (Mt), 5% more than the previous month's production and 4% more than that of October 2016 (table 1). Ending inventories for October 2017 were 237,000 metric tons (t), 6% less than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in October 2017 was 1.51 Mt, slightly more than that of September 2017 and 3% less than that of October 2016.

Exports of soda ash in September 2017 were 593,000 t, 5% more than those of August 2017 and 31% more than those of September 2016 (table 4). For the first 9 months of 2017, exports have increased 4 % compared to the same period in 2016. Imports of soda ash in September 2017 were 898 t, 24% less than those of August 2017 and 65% less than those of September 2016. Soda ash import tonnages can differ widely from month to month, but generally are much smaller than soda ash export tonnages.

Apparent consumption for September 2017 was 390,000 t, a decrease of 8% compared with that of August 2017 and 19% less than that of September 2016. Apparent consumption can change significantly from month to month mostly owing to changes in the quantity of exports but usually stabilizes over the course of the year. For the first 9 months of 2017, apparent

consumption was slightly less than that for the first 9 months of 2016.

Table 5 provides reported consumption statistics for the third quarter of 2017. During the third quarter, 581,000 t (47%) went to glassmaking and 333,000 t (27%) was consumed for chemicals. Total consumption for the third quarter of 2017 was 6% less than that of the third quarter of 2016. Comparing the two quarters shows an 8% decrease in consumption for the overall glass segment with decreases in every glass category. Consumption decreased in every category except flue gas desulfurization, other miscellaneous uses, pulp and paper, and sales to distributors. For the first 9 months of 2017, total reported consumption was 3.67 Mt, 4% less than that of the first 9 months of 2016.

All percentages in this report were calculated using unrounded data.

*List services and web feed subscribers are the first to receive notification of USGS minerals information publications and data releases. For information on how to subscribe, go to <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/>.*

TABLE 1  
SALIENT SODA ASH STATISTICS<sup>1</sup>

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Soda ash		Wyoming trona production
	Production <sup>2</sup>	Stocks, end of period	
2016:			
January–October	9,810	405	14,600
October	995	405	1,560
November	990	365	1,550
December	1,010	336	1,620
January–December	11,800	336	17,700
2017:			
January	929	265	1,560
February	897	293	1,340
March	1,030	257	1,610
April	947	301	1,420
May	993	291	1,530
June	1,020	306 <sup>r</sup>	1,410
July	1,020	237	1,530
August	997	244	1,510
September	989	251	1,490
October	1,040	237	1,510
January–October	9,860	237	14,900

<sup>r</sup>Revised.

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

<sup>2</sup>Production 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 OR LOCALITY, IN 2017<sup>1,2</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September			January–September		
									Quantity	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)
Argentina	6,000	27,300	25,900	40	22,100	16,900	5,000	16,800	4,000	\$1,000	\$250	124,000	2	\$25,600
Australia	7,110	29,000	33,600	32,000	--	34,100	35,000	--	34,500	7,020	204	205,000	4	41,300
Belgium	1,260	14,900	10,100	14,400	35,200	4,060	12,600	399	21,500	4,720	219	115,000	2	26,300
Brazil	38,300	47,900	132,000	59,400	70,500	47,200	92,400	88,700	74,700	14,300	192	651,000	13	124,000
Canada	17,200	18,200	23,900	17,400	18,200	16,500	21,400	18,900	18,700	3,520	188	170,000	3	32,600
Chile	38,400	21,000	10,700	62,500	--	52,600	11,000	48,200	22,500	5,010	222	267,000	5	56,600
China	62	66,600	35,000	--	--	--	--	62	--	--	--	102,000	2	17,200
Colombia	9,000	14,000	8,000	16,500	4,640	14,900	16,700	--	9,630	1,940	201	93,300	2	18,100
Guatemala	--	6,500	--	12,000	--	--	8,000	--	13,500	3,240	239	40,000	1	8,990
India	--	--	--	33,000	44	28,000	--	46,000	74	8	110	107,000	2	16,100
Indonesia	71,200	28,300	72,600	29,200	66,400	37,000	55,600	67,200	87,300	17,400	199	515,000	10	101,000
Japan	22,600	17,000	4,000	45,300	--	35,500	32,400	16,700	35,000	6,180	176	209,000	4	35,500
Korea, Republic of	26,400	23,100	18,000	17,800	38,700	15,000	20,100	27,200	20,100	3,630	180	206,000	4	36,600
Malaysia	34,500	15,000	7,000	35,100	57,400	--	23,300	37,300	8,000	1,520	190	218,000	4	41,000
Mexico	82,400	83,300	114,000	79,400	96,700	93,400	100,000	95,200	106,000	23,600	222	851,000	16	194,000
Netherlands	22,800	--	8,050	--	4,000	4,000	--	--	4,000	890	223	42,800	1	8,860
Nigeria	5,900	--	7,970	--	7,940	--	10,000	--	--	--	--	31,800	1	7,910
Peru	6,580	--	75	19,100	75	75	7,500	5,070	12,200	3,230	265	50,600	1	10,900
Philippines	8,500	--	8,000	--	7,500	--	8,500	--	10,000	2,450	245	42,500	1	8,760
Saudi Arabia	16,000	--	--	--	17,000	--	18,000	--	--	--	--	51,000	1	8,190
South Africa	7,490	--	5,320	12,200	--	15,100	--	7,450	25,300	4,270	169	72,800	1	12,300
Spain	25,800	28,600	136	20,100	17,100	11,600	12,900	136	5,080	1,120	220	121,000	2	27,200
Taiwan	11,400	20,500	15,500	17,700	11,700	12,500	33,700	15,000	6,650	1,260	189	145,000	3	26,400
Thailand	38,000	25,900	21,300	33,100	18,800	20,200	27,000	29,100	16,800	3,360	200	230,000	4	44,000
Tunisia	9,900	--	--	--	18,100	12,100	--	--	21,700	4,450	205	61,800	1	12,700
United Arab Emirates	9,000	--	--	--	17,500	--	29,500	--	--	--	--	56,000	1	9,020
United Kingdom	31,400	10,000	--	15,100	70	20,200	13,600	--	17,500	3,150	180	108,000	2	20,300
Venezuela	5,000	--	8,400	12,500	--	10,300	4,400	2	4,300	984	229	44,900	1	10,600
Vietnam	27,500	--	31,500	12,000	27,500	4,000	16,100	47,000	7,500	1,500	201	173,000	3	35,600
Other	2,530	13,000	3,720	13,700	165	5,090	21,700	370	6,160	1,590	751	66,500	(4)	13,600
Total	582,000	510,000	604,000	610,000	557,000	510,000	637,000	567,000	593,000	121,000	205	5,170,000	100	1,030,000

-- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>October 2017 data were not available at time of publication.

<sup>3</sup>Free alongside ship values at U.S. ports.

<sup>4</sup>Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3  
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY, IN 2017<sup>1, 2</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Quantity	September		January–September		
										Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)
China	236	403	195	68	36	449	481	44	204	\$121	\$591	2,110	13	\$624
France	236	40	20	20	40	50	30	40	80	42	530	556	3	199
Germany	251	303	1	549	93	264	1	(4)	--	--	--	1,460	9	281
Italy	--	17	--	836	1,080	418	--	171	551	80	145	3,080	18	421
Japan	1	(4)	--	120	190	1	152	2	2	9	3,860	468	3	125
Korea, Republic of	206	514	617	411	800	297	495	198	18	12	660	3,550	21	436
Mexico	232	58	369	136	95	423	172	387	(4)	9	2,210	1,870	11	754
Poland	106	160	58	--	--	58	136	--	--	--	--	517	3	182
Turkey	106	--	--	106	--	8	8	8	8	6	773	243	1	49
United Kingdom	359	472	490	198	403	233	213	335	35	20	562	2,740	16	667
Other	1	1	7	3	7	8	38	5	--	--	--	70	(4)	74
Total	1,730	1,970	1,760	2,450	2,750	2,210	1,730	1,190	898	298	332	16,700	100	3,810

-- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>October 2017 data were not available at time of publication.

<sup>3</sup>Cost, insurance, and freight values at U.S. ports.

<sup>4</sup>Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4  
U.S. APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons)

Period	Production	Exports	Imports	Net stock		Apparent consumption <sup>2</sup>
				Increase	Decrease	
2016:						
January–December	11,800,000	6,780,000	35,300	50,900	--	5,010,000
January–September	8,810,000	4,980,000	32,400	57,300	--	3,800,000
September	961,000	453,000	2,580	28,100	--	482,000
October	995,000	560,000	1,120	62,200	--	373,000
November	990,000	547,000	876	--	39,800	484,000
December	1,010,000	693,000	952	--	28,800	349,000
2017:						
January–September	8,820,000	5,170,000	16,700	--	85,000	3,760,000
January	929,000	582,000	1,730	--	70,800	419,000
February	897,000	510,000	1,970	27,700	--	361,000
March	1,030,000	604,000	1,760	--	35,700	464,000
April	947,000	610,000	2,450	44,000	--	296,000
May	993,000	557,000	2,750	--	10,600	449,000
June	1,020,000	510,000	2,210	15,000 <sup>r</sup>	--	500,000 <sup>r</sup>
July	1,020,000	637,000	1,730	--	68,600 <sup>r</sup>	452,000 <sup>r</sup>
August	997,000	567,000	1,190	6,430	--	425,000
September	989,000	593,000	898	7,480	--	390,000
October	1,040,000	NA	NA	--	14,442	NA

<sup>r</sup>Revised. NA Not available. -- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>Production plus imports minus exports plus or minus stock changes.

TABLE 5  
REPORTED CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH IN THE UNITED STATES, BY END USE, BY QUARTER<sup>1</sup>

(Thousand metric tons)

NAICS <sup>2</sup> code	End use	2016					2017			
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter– 4th quarter	1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	1st quarter– 3d quarter
3272	Glass:									
327213	Container	300	312	306	284	1,200	273	296	284	853
327211	Flat	249	265	252	254	1,020	242	252	235	730
327993	Fiber	41	41	40	40	161	36	36	36	108
327212	Other	32	33	31	30	126	27	27	25	79
	Total	622	650	629	608	2,510	577	611	581	1,770
32518	Chemicals	361	361	374	387	1,480	344 <sup>r</sup>	338 <sup>r</sup>	333	1,020
325611	Soaps and detergents	79	80	78	85	322	73	74	73	220
322	Pulp and paper	13	12	10	9	44	10	9	12	31
221310	Water treatment <sup>3</sup>	18	20	21	15	75	8 <sup>r</sup>	9 <sup>r</sup>	9	26
56221	Flue gas desulfurization	48	49	59	53	209	54	50 <sup>r</sup>	61	164
4246	Distributors	76	68	71	70	285	78	73	71	222
	Other	43	42	55	54	193	65 <sup>r</sup>	75 <sup>r</sup>	83	223
	Total domestic consumption <sup>4</sup>	1,260	1,280	1,300	1,280	5,120	1,210	1,240	1,220	3,670
	Exports <sup>5</sup>	1,580	1,690	1,640	1,710	6,610	1,690	1,630	1,830	5,150
	Canada	54	49	49	49	202	53	46	50	149
	Total industry sales <sup>6</sup>	2,840	2,970	2,930	2,990	11,700	2,890	2,870	3,060	8,820
	Total sales from plants	2,850	2,980	2,980	2,960	11,800	2,920	2,930	3,170	9,020
	Total production	2,870	2,930	3,010	3,000	11,800	2,860	2,960	3,010	8,820

<sup>1</sup>Revised.

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

<sup>2</sup>North American Industry Classification System.

<sup>3</sup>Includes soda ash equivalent from soda liquors and purge liquors sold to power plants for water treatment. Sales of mine water are excluded.

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

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

<sup>6</sup>Represents 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.