

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN JANUARY 2017

U.S. natural soda ash production in January was 929,000 metric tons (t), 8% less than the previous month's production and 3% less than that of January 2016.

Ending inventories for January 2017 were 265,000 metric tons (t), 21% less than the preceding month's inventories.

Wyoming trona production in January 2017 was 1.56 million metric tons (Mt), 4% less than that of December 2016 and slightly less than that of January 2016.

Exports of soda ash in December 2016 were 693,000 t, 27% more than those of November 2016. Total exports in 2016 were 6.78 Mt, 6% more than the 6.40 Mt exported in 2015.

Imports of soda ash in December 2016 were 952 t, 9% more than those of November 2016. Total imports in 2016 were 35,300 t, 11% less than those of 2015.

Apparent consumption for December 2016 was 349,000 t, a decrease of 28% compared with that of November 2016. Apparent consumption in 2016 was 5.01 Mt, 4% less than that of 2015.

Table 5 provides reported consumption statistics for the fourth quarter of 2016. During the fourth quarter, 608,000 t (48%) went to glassmaking and 387,000 t (29%) was consumed

for chemicals. Total consumption for the fourth quarter of 2016 was slightly higher than that of the fourth quarter of 2015. For 2016, total reported consumption was up by 3% compared with that of 2015, based on data submitted by domestic soda ash producers. A review for the period shows a 5% increase in consumption for the overall glass segment with increases reported for container, fiber, and flat glass. Consumption in the chemicals and detergent and soaps segments decreased slightly. In the considerably smaller market for water treatment, consumption increased by 14%, but soda ash for the pulp and paper category decreased by 25% during 2016.

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	
2016:			
January	956	326	1,570
February	909	310	1,460
March	1,010	315	1,240
April	955	301	1,450
May	987	280	1,420
June	989	306	1,380
July	1,060	357	1,470
August	984	314	1,460
September	961	342	1,560
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

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	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December			January–December		
												Quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
Argentina	13,100	62	24,000	16,200	22,000	6,660	2,150	--	18,700	17,500	--	13,600	\$2,840	\$209	134,000	2	\$28,400
Australia	--	31,900	--	35,200	35,000	--	--	61,000	--	35,000	--	35,000	6,530	186	233,000	3	43,500
Brazil	92,200	71,700	52,500	112,000	99,900	96,200	76,400	74,900	85,400	88,100	84,600	95,000	18,700	197	1,030,000	15	205,000
Canada	17,300	21,900	19,200	21,300	16,300	17,900	15,600	17,600	19,200	16,800	18,200	17,200	3,280	190	218,000	3	41,900
Chile	9,180	36,200	37,200	25,600	36,200	--	43,200	35,500	38,400	22,500	14,900	59,900	12,800	214	359,000	5	77,000
China	41	41	35,000	82	34,200	41	--	45	41	30,600	44	35,000	4,300	123	135,000	2	19,500
Colombia	5,000	16,900	--	6,160	18,000	13,700	15,500	19,200	2,030	11,000	18,200	16,900	3,260	193	143,000	2	27,700
El Salvador	--	6,000	--	--	6,150	--	--	3,000	--	--	3,000	--	--	--	18,100	(4)	3,740
France	5,940	--	9,000	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	14,900	(4)	2,440
Guatemala	--	6,320	--	5,000	--	6,400	--	--	7,000	--	6,000	5,000	1,080	216	35,700	(4)	7,660
Indonesia	52,700	61,500	31,700	59,400	61,100	55,400	61,500	97,700	15,000	27,800	56,900	49,800	9,360	188	631,000	9	118,000
Japan	30,500	14,100	39,000	19,100	31,500	27,500	--	17,000	31,500	30,500	9,520	30,000	5,200	174	280,000	4	49,800
Korea, Republic of	24,600	21,600	6,000	29,100	21,500	24,100	13,000	30,100	25	21,900	28,500	39,000	6,570	169	259,000	4	45,500
Malaysia	16,100	11,000	--	--	9,500	12,000	10,500	10,000	14,000	10,000	12,500	9,420	4,120	437	115,000	2	24,700
Mexico	96,800	91,900	74,400	102,000	107,000	121,000	94,400	116,000	77,000	88,100	109,000	133,000	25,700	193	1,210,000	18	261,000
Netherlands	16,100	--	19,200	80	20,500	30	20,600	20,500	--	10,000	10,100	--	--	--	117,000	2	18,700
New Zealand	--	7,000	--	--	--	24	--	7,000	--	--	--	--	--	--	14,000	(4)	2,700
Philippines	6,700	12,000	--	11,000	--	--	11,000	--	10,600	--	7,700	--	--	--	59,000	1	11,200
Saudi Arabia	1,210	17,500	18,500	--	15,500	15,000	22,500	23,000	16,000	20,500	--	13,000	2,190	168	163,000	2	27,700
South Africa	12,500	7,480	--	--	7,520	14,900	7,500	9,930	--	19,500	10,100	--	--	--	89,400	1	15,100
Taiwan	6,950	26,400	--	19,400	10,000	26,000	18,500	22,500	5,000	17,000	25,400	16,000	2,680	168	193,000	3	33,400
Thailand	29,000	23,300	37,100	12,000	22,000	18,600	39,200	26,300	27,000	13,800	30,000	10,200	1,570	154	288,000	4	53,600
United Arab Emirates	15	6,500	12,000	--	6,500	16,000	15,500	5,000	9,000	11,000	--	22,500	3,670	163	104,000	2	17,500
United Kingdom	20,100	20,000	24,000	19,900	26,900	20,000	4,970	26,300	--	35,900	21,800	--	--	--	220,000	3	42,600
Venezuela	--	8,890	--	11,300	15,400	--	18,400	4,010	9,370	--	571	10,800	2,630	243	78,700	1	18,700
Vietnam	26,500	14,400	11,000	32,000	23,800	--	10,800	21,000	13,500	--	66,500	--	--	--	219,000	3	42,700
Other	792	12,700	87,000	476	51,900	36,700	30,100	21,400	53,800	33,000	13,800	82,000	16,000	195	424,000	6	75,500
Total	483,000	547,000	537,000	537,000	699,000	528,000	531,000	668,000	453,000	560,000	547,000	693,000	133,000	191	6,780,000	100	1,320,000

-- Zero.

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

²January 2017 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	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December			January–December		
												Quantity	Value ³	Unit value	Quantity	Percent	Value ³
													(thousand dollars)			of total quantity	
China	7	144	3	21	86	130	21	98	33	--	1	28	\$20	\$721	573	2	\$199
France	153	--	--	--	--	1	--	166	283	--	--	--	--	--	603	2	146
Germany	632	2,080	2,330	1,630	3,030	1,290	2,110	2,940	1,130	171	181	2	12	7,030	17,500	50	2,620
Italy	--	571	1,370	1,310	190	950	1,330	209	190	568	--	456	62	135	7,140	20	1,570
Japan	2	1	--	226	120	3	120	120	--	--	362	--	--	--	955	3	147
Taiwan	117	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	117	(4)	17
Turkey	8	95	245	--	8	8	8	65	--	8	8	8	6	773	457	1	144
United Kingdom	513	752	705	518	602	270	270	253	396	144	218	18	9	512	4,660	13	854
Other	6	22	60	39	235	441	561	598	543	233	108	441	164	371	3,290	9	976
Total	1,440	3,670	4,710	3,740	4,270	3,090	4,420	4,450	2,580	1,120	876	952	272	286	35,300	100	6,670

-- Zero.

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

²January 2017 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	6,400,000	39,900	14,600	--	5,200,000
December	952,000	571,000	2,280	--	62,700	446,000
2016:						
January–December	11,800,000	6,780,000	35,300	50,900	--	5,010,000
January	956,000	483,000	1,440	40,400	--	434,000
February	909,000	547,000	3,670	--	15,600	381,000
March	1,010,000	537,000	4,710	4,920	--	472,000
April	955,000	537,000	3,740	--	13,900	436,000
May	987,000	699,000	4,270	--	21,100	314,000
June	989,000	528,000	3,090	25,800	--	439,000
July	1,060,000	531,000	4,420	51,300	--	484,000
August	984,000	668,000	4,450	--	42,700	363,000
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	929,000	NA	NA	--	70,800	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				
		4th quarter	1st quarter– 4th quarter	1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter– 4th quarter
3272	Glass:							
327213	Container	282	1,140	300	312	306	284	1,200
327211	Flat	246	971 ^r	249	265	252	254	1,020
327993	Fiber	41	149 ^r	41	41	40	40	161
327212	Other	34	134	32	33	31	30	126
	Total	603	2,390	622	650	629	608	2,510
32518	Chemicals	391	1,490	361	361	374	387	1,480
325611	Soaps and detergents	84	327 ^r	79	80	78	85	322
322	Pulp and paper	13	59	13	12	10	9	44
221310	Water treatment ³	16	66 ^r	18	20	21	15	75
56221	Flue gas desulfurization	51	223 ^r	48	49	59	53	209
4246	Distributors	68	286	76	68	71	70	285
	Other	28	141 ^r	43	42	55	54	193
	Total domestic consumption ⁴	1,250	4,990	1,260	1,280	1,300	1,280	5,120
	Exports ⁵	1,590	6,440	1,580	1,690	1,640 ^r	1,710	6,610
	Canada	56	230	54	49	49	49	202
	Total industry sales ⁶	2,840	11,400	2,840	2,970	2,930 ^r	2,990	11,700
	Total sales from plants	2,850	11,600	2,850	2,980	2,980	2,960	11,800
	Total production	2,850	11,600	2,870	2,930	3,010	3,000	11,800

¹Revised.

²Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

³North American Industry Classification System.

⁴Includes soda ash equivalent from soda liquors and purge liquors sold to power plants for water treatment. Sales of mine water are excluded.

⁵Imports reported by the producer/importer have been distributed into appropriate end-use categories listed above.

⁶As reported by producers; includes Canada. Data may not necessarily agree with those reported by the U.S. Census Bureau for the same periods.

⁷Represents 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.