

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN JULY 2017

U.S. natural soda ash production in July was 1.02 million metric tons (Mt), unchanged from the previous month's production and 4% less than that of July 2016 (table 1). Ending inventories for July 2017 were 237,000 metric tons (t), 24% less than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in July 2017 was 1.53 Mt, 8% more than that of June 2017 and 4% more than that of July 2016.

Exports of soda ash in June 2017 were 510,000 t, 8% less than those of May 2017 and 3% less than those of June 2016 (table 4). For the first half of 2017, exports of soda ash were 3.37 Mt, slightly more than during the same period in 2016. Imports of soda ash in June 2017 were 2,210 t, 20% less than those of May 2017 and 29% less than those of June 2016. For the first half of 2017, imports of soda ash were 12,900 t, 39% less than in the same period in 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 June 2017 was 494,000 t, an increase of 10% compared with that of May 2017 and 13% more than that of June 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 6 months of 2017, apparent consumption was slightly more than that for the first 6 months of 2016.

Table 5 provides reported consumption statistics for the second quarter of 2017. During the second quarter, 611,000 t (49%) went to glassmaking and 339,000 t (27%) was consumed for chemicals. Total consumption for the second quarter of 2017 was 3% less than that of the second quarter of 2016. Comparing the two quarters shows a 6% 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, and sales to distributors. For the first half of 2017, total reported consumption was 2.45 Mt, 4% less than that of the first half of 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–July	6,870	357	9,990
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
February	897	293	1,340
March	1,030	257	1,610
April	947	301	1,420
May	993	291	1,530
June	1,020	312	1,410
July	1,020	237	1,530
January–July	6,840	237	10,400

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 2017^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	March	April	May	Quantity	June	Unit value	January-June		
							Value ³ (thousand dollars)		Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
Argentina	6,000	27,300	25,900	40	22,100	16,900	\$3,550	\$210	98,200	3	\$20,200
Australia	7,110	29,000	33,600	32,000	--	34,100	6,680	196	136,000	4	27,300
Belgium	1,260	14,900	10,100	14,400	35,200	4,060	896	221	80,000	2	18,800
Brazil	38,300	47,900	132,000	59,400	70,500	47,200	9,340	198	395,000	12	76,600
Canada	17,200	18,200	23,900	17,400	18,200	16,500	3,130	189	111,000	3	21,400
Chile	38,400	21,000	10,700	62,500	--	52,600	11,400	218	185,000	5	39,300
China	62	66,600	35,000	--	--	--	--	--	102,000	3	17,200
Colombia	9,000	14,000	8,000	16,500	4,640	14,900	3,070	206	67,000	2	12,900
Costa Rica	--	4,000	26	3,000	--	--	--	--	7,030	(4)	1,550
Ecuador	--	--	3,500	5,000	--	--	--	--	8,500	(4)	1,790
El Salvador	--	3,000	--	2,830	--	--	--	--	5,830	(4)	1,160
Guatemala	--	6,500	--	12,000	--	--	--	--	18,500	1	4,000
India	--	--	--	33,000	44	28,000	4,200	150	61,000	2	9,160
Indonesia	71,200	28,300	72,600	29,200	66,400	37,000	7,340	198	305,000	9	59,300
Japan	22,600	17,000	4,000	45,300	--	35,500	6,540	184	124,000	4	21,200
Korea, Republic of	26,400	23,100	18,000	17,800	38,700	15,000	2,570	171	139,000	4	24,400
Malaysia	34,500	15,000	7,000	35,100	57,400	--	--	--	149,000	4	27,700
Mexico	82,400	83,300	114,000	79,400	96,700	93,400	21,200	227	549,000	16	126,000
Netherlands	22,800	--	8,050	--	4,000	4,000	890	223	38,800	1	7,970
New Zealand	--	6,000	--	--	--	5,000	830	166	11,000	(4)	1,950
Nigeria	5,900	--	7,970	--	7,940	--	--	--	21,800	1	5,460
Peru	6,580	--	75	19,100	75	75	8	110	25,900	1	4,960
Philippines	8,500	--	8,000	--	7,500	--	--	--	24,000	1	4,590
Saudi Arabia	16,000	--	--	--	17,000	--	--	--	33,000	1	5,400
South Africa	7,490	--	5,320	12,200	--	15,100	2,550	169	40,100	1	6,780
Spain	25,800	28,600	136	20,100	17,100	11,600	2,720	234	103,000	3	23,100
Taiwan	11,400	20,500	15,500	17,700	11,700	12,500	2,320	186	89,300	3	15,700
Thailand	38,000	25,900	21,300	33,100	18,800	20,200	4,510	224	157,000	5	29,300
Trinidad and Tobago	2,500	--	--	2,400	--	--	--	--	4,900	(4)	842
Tunisia	9,900	--	--	--	18,100	12,100	2,500	207	40,100	1	8,230
United Arab Emirates	9,000	--	--	--	17,500	--	--	--	26,500	1	4,270
United Kingdom	31,400	10,000	--	15,100	70	20,200	3,630	180	76,700	2	14,700

TABLE 2
U.S. EXPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY, IN 2017^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	March	April	May	Quantity	June	Unit value	January–June		
							Value ³ (thousand dollars)		Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
Venezuela	5,000	--	8,400	12,500	--	10,300	2,360	229	36,200	1	8,490
Vietnam	27,500	--	31,500	12,000	27,500	4,000	758	189	103,000	3	19,800
Other	34	2	189	460	165	86	61	709	936	(4)	279
Total	582,000	510,000	604,000	610,000	557,000	510,000	103,000	202	3,370,000	100	672,000

-- Zero.

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

²July 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 2017^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	March	April	May	Quantity	June		Quantity	January–June	
							Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value		Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
China	236	403	195	68	36	449	\$82	\$183	1,390	11	\$374
France	236	40	20	20	40	50	26	530	406	3	119
Germany	251	303	1	549	93	264	54	203	1,460	11	258
Italy	--	17	--	836	1,080	418	61	147	2,350	18	317
Japan	1	(4)	--	120	190	1	7	6,520	312	2	84
Korea, Republic of	206	514	617	411	800	297	36	120	2,840	22	341
Mexico	232	58	369	136	95	423	159	376	1,310	10	526
Poland	106	160	58	--	--	58	23	391	381	3	132
Turkey	106	--	--	106	--	8	6	787	220	2	32
United Kingdom	359	472	490	198	403	233	81	349	2,160	17	522
Other	1	1	7	3	7	8	12	1,460	27	(4)	55
Total	1,730	1,970	1,760	2,450	2,750	2,210	547	248	12,900	100	2,760

-- Zero.

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

²July 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	
2016:						
January–December	11,800,000	6,780,000	35,300	50,900	--	5,010,000
January–June	5,810,000	3,330,000	20,900	20,600 ^r	--	2,470,000
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–June	5,820,000	3,370,000	12,900	--	24,500	2,480,000
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	20,900	--	494,000
July	1,020,000	NA	NA	--	74,500	NA

[†]Revised. 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	2016					2017		
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter– 4th quarter	1st quarter	2d quarter	1st quarter– 2d quarter
3272	Glass:								
327213	Container	300	312	306	284	1,200	273 ^r	296	569
327211	Flat	249	265	252	254	1,020	242 ^r	252	494
327993	Fiber	41	41	40	40	161	36 ^r	36	72
327212	Other	32	33	31	30	126	27 ^r	27	54
	Total	622	650	629	608	2,510	577	611	1,190
32518	Chemicals	361	361	374	387	1,480	345 ^r	339	684
325611	Soaps and detergents	79	80	78	85	322	73	74	147
322	Pulp and paper	13	12	10	9	44	10	9	19
221310	Water treatment ³	18	20	21	15	75	14	16	30
56221	Flue gas desulfurization	48	49	59	53	209	54 ^r	49	103
4246	Distributors	76	68	71	70	285	78	73	151
	Other	43	42	55	54	193	58 ^r	67	125
	Total domestic consumption ⁴	1,260	1,280	1,300	1,280	5,120	1,210 ^r	1,240	2,450
	Exports ⁵	1,580	1,690	1,640	1,710	6,610	1,690 ^r	1,630	3,320
	Canada	54	49	49	49	202	53	46	99
	Total industry sales ⁶	2,840	2,970	2,930	2,990	11,700	2,890 ^r	2,870	5,760
	Total sales from plants	2,850	2,980	2,980	2,960	11,800	2,920	2,930	5,850
	Total production	2,870	2,930	3,010	3,000	11,800	2,860	2,960	5,820

^rRevised.

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 power plants 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.