

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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## SODA ASH IN APRIL 2017

U.S. natural soda ash production in April was 947,000 metric tons (t), 8% less than the previous month's production and slightly less than that of April 2016 (table 1). Ending inventories for April 2017 were 301,000 metric tons (t), 17% more than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in April 2017 was 1.42 million metric tons (Mt), 12% less than that of March 2017 and 3% less than that of April 2016. Wyoming trona production in April 2017 was 1.34 million metric tons, 15% less than that of March 2017 and 9% less than that of April 2016.

Exports of soda ash in March 2017 were 604,000 t, 18% more than those of February 2017 and 13% more than those of March 2016 (table 4). Imports of soda ash in March 2017 were 1,760 t, 11% less than those of February 2017 and 63% less than those of March 2016.

For the first quarter of 2017, exports of soda ash were 1.7 Mt, 8% more than exports in the first quarter of 2016. Imports in the first quarter of 2017 totaled 5,460 t, a decrease of 44% compared with those of 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 March 2017 was 464,000 t, an increase of 29% compared with that of February 2017 and slightly less than that of March 2016. For the first quarter of 2017, apparent consumption was 1.24 Mt, a decrease of 3% compared with that of the first quarter of 2016.

All percentages in this report were calculated using unrounded data.

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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–April	3,830	301	5,730
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
February	897	293	1,340
March	1,030	257	1,610
April	947	301	1,420
January–April	3,800	301	5,930

<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, IN 2017<sup>1,2</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	March			January–March		
			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	\$5,250	\$203	59,200	3	\$12,100
Australia	7,110	29,000	33,600	6,550	195	69,700	4	13,900
Belgium	1,260	14,900	10,100	2,240	222	26,300	2	6,880
Brazil	38,300	47,900	132,000	25,800	196	218,000	13	42,500
Canada	17,200	18,200	23,900	4,480	188	59,300	3	11,600
Chile	38,400	21,000	10,700	2,230	208	70,000	4	14,600
China	62	66,600	35,000	6,020	172	102,000	6	17,200
Colombia	9,000	14,000	8,000	1,140	143	31,000	2	5,700
Costa Rica	--	4,000	26	3	110	4,030	(4)	873
El Salvador	--	3,000	--	--	--	3,000	(4)	578
Guatemala	--	6,500	--	--	--	6,500	(4)	1,420
Indonesia	71,200	28,300	72,600	14,200	196	172,000	10	33,500
Japan	22,600	17,000	4,000	600	150	43,600	3	7,130
Korea, Republic of	26,400	23,100	18,000	2,910	162	67,500	4	11,700
Malaysia	34,500	15,000	7,000	1,330	190	56,500	3	10,700
Mexico	82,400	83,300	114,000	26,000	229	280,000	16	64,200
Netherlands	22,800	--	8,050	1,790	223	30,800	2	6,190
New Zealand	--	6,000	--	--	--	6,000	(4)	1,120
Nigeria	5,900	--	7,970	2,200	276	13,900	1	3,530
Peru	6,580	--	75	8	110	6,650	(4)	990
Philippines	8,500	--	8,000	1,600	200	16,500	1	3,080
Saudi Arabia	16,000	--	--	--	--	16,000	1	2,760
South Africa	7,490	--	5,320	898	169	12,800	1	2,170
Spain	25,800	28,600	136	15	110	54,400	3	11,900
Taiwan	11,400	20,500	15,500	2,330	150	47,400	3	7,760
Thailand	38,000	25,900	21,300	3,810	179	85,100	5	15,800
Tunisia	9,900	--	--	--	--	9,900	1	2,030
United Arab Emirates	9,000	--	--	--	--	9,000	1	1,480
United Kingdom	31,400	10,000	--	--	--	41,400	2	8,240
Venezuela	5,000	--	8,400	1,930	229	13,400	1	3,080
Vietnam	27,500	--	31,500	6,480	206	59,000	3	11,800
Other	2,530	2	3,690	839	228	6,230	(4)	1,280
Total	582,000	510,000	604,000	121,000	200	1,700,000	100	338,000

-- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>April 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, IN 2017<sup>1,2</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	Quantity	March		Quantity	January–March	
				Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)	Unit value		Percent of total quantity	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)
China	236	403	195	\$79	\$404	833	15	\$206
France	236	40	20	11	531	296	5	61
Germany	251	303	1	23	15,500	556	10	96
Korea, Republic of	206	514	617	74	120	1,340	24	160
Mexico	232	58	369	145	393	659	12	264
Poland	106	160	58	21	360	323	6	109
Turkey	106	--	--	--	--	106	2	13
United Kingdom	359	472	490	131	267	1,320	24	293
Other	2	18	7	13	1,980	27	(4)	41
Total	1,730	1,970	1,760	496	282	5,460	100	1,240

-- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>April 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–March	2,870,000	1,570,000	9,820	29,700	--	1,290,000
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–March	2,860,000	1,700,000	5,460	--	78,800	1,240,000
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	NA	NA	44,000	--	NA

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.