

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN JULY 2019

U.S. natural soda ash production in July was 972,000 metric tons (t), a 3% increase compared with that of the revised previous month but 9% less than that of July 2018. Ending stocks were 250,000 t, 13% less than those of the preceding month (table 1,4). Wyoming trona production in July 2019 was 1.53 million metric tons (Mt), slightly more than that of June 2019 and 3% more than that of July 2018. Exports of soda ash in July 2019 were 557,000 t, 9% less than those of June 2019 and 8% less than those of July 2018 (tables 2, 4).

Relatively large quantities of soda ash were imported from Turkey in September 2018, followed by similar quantities in March and June of 2019. July 2019 imports of soda ash were 1,190 t, much smaller than the 36,200 t, mostly from Turkey, that were imported in June (tables 3, 4). Soda ash import tonnages can differ significantly from month to month, but generally are much smaller than soda ash export tonnages.

Apparent consumption for July 2019 was 453,000 t, a 27% increase from that of June 2019 and 6% more than that of July 2018. 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 (table 4).

Table 5 provides reported soda ash consumption statistics for the second quarter of 2019. Reported consumption for the second quarter was 1.17 Mt, 6% less than the reported consumption for the first quarter of 2018. Reported consumption for the first 6 months of 2019 was 2.34 Mt, 4% less than that of the same period in 2018. During the second quarter of 2019, 548,000 t (47%) went to glassmaking and 358,000 t (31%) was consumed in the production of chemicals.

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	
2018:			
January–July	6,910 ^r	282 ^r	10,600
July	1,070	282	1,490
August	930	293	1,180
September	988	268	1,320
October	1,010	237	1,500
November	997	309	1,490
December	1,060	297	1,580
January–December	11,900	297	17,600
2019:			
January	1,000	300	1,680
February	920	270	1,500
March	941	276	1,680
April	999	337	1,530
May	994	275	1,220
June	946 ^r	287 ^r	1,520 ^r
July	972	250	1,530
January–July	6,780	250	10,700

^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 OR LOCALITY, IN 2019¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July			January–July		
							Quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)
Argentina	7,000	7,700	--	16,700	79	80	19,700	\$4,530	\$230	51,300	1	\$11,900
Australia	35,000	4,040	34,000	29,000	34,000	--	17,500	3,570	204	154,000	4	36,400
Brazil	94,500	104,000	35,000	60,800	83,400	82,000	50,300	10,300	205	510,000	12	107,000
Canada	15,800	17,500	15,200	18,300	18,400	14,700	15,700	3,930	250	116,000	3	27,900
Chile	13,000	45,200	31,500	14,200	46,800	46,300	32,800	7,640	233	230,000	6	53,100
China	--	61	--	--	36,000	--	--	--	--	36,100	1	7,200
Colombia	8,000	21,400	10,500	8,750	8,200	9,000	20,000	4,550	227	85,900	2	19,400
Ecuador	9,500	--	10,000	--	--	--	8,000	1,800	225	27,500	1	6,200
Guatemala	4,000	7,000	--	--	11,500	5,000	5,220	2,160	413	32,700	1	8,430
India	--	43,500	--	65,700	12,500	27,000	37,500	6,170	165	186,000	5	32,700
Indonesia	88,100	21,300	90,800	19,400	105,000	73,000	46,700	10,600	228	444,000	11	100,000
Japan	3,000	34,400	15,100	21,500	--	55,300	3,040	672	221	132,000	3	27,800
Korea, Republic of	11,500	18,000	15,700	34,200	26	41,600	23,600	4,930	209	145,000	4	31,100
Malaysia	46,100	62,800	52,500	39,300	43,200	39,500	52,100	11,900	227	335,000	8	74,900
Mexico	144,000	106,000	112,000	114,000	111,000	92,100	112,000	27,200	244	790,000	19	185,000
Nigeria	--	10,000	--	--	8,500	--	9,000	2,480	275	27,500	1	8,700
Peru	17,000	--	16,300	1,280	10,800	75	--	--	--	45,400	1	10,200
Philippines	7,500	--	--	9,000	14,600	--	13,500	3,040	225	44,600	1	9,720
Saudi Arabia	98	10,300	39	15,100	536	8,500	60	23	383	34,600	1	6,340
South Africa	--	10,100	--	4,790	--	14,400	--	--	--	29,300	1	5,450
Taiwan	16,500	9,500	15,200	38,800	8,000	17,900	10,200	2,290	224	116,000	3	26,800
Thailand	35,100	26,600	35,600	7,500	10,000	46,100	38,300	9,330	244	199,000	5	46,400
Tunisia	--	20,000	--	--	15,000	--	20,000	4,780	239	55,000	1	13,300
United Arab Emirates	--	15,500	--	6,000	--	11,000	--	--	--	32,500	1	6,140
Vietnam	31,000	15,000	18,500	31,500	35,500	30,000	17,500	4,560	260	179,000	4	40,600
Other	476	11,600	462	6,540	28,300	324	5,190	1,180	227	52,900	1	12,300
Total	587,000	621,000	508,000	562,000	641,000	614,000	557,000	128,000	229	4,090,000	100	915,000

-- Zero.

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

²Free alongside ship values at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY, IN 2019¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July			January–July		
							Quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)
Bulgaria	288	612	432	882	648	810	648	\$237	\$366	4,320	6	\$1,550
China	77	72	180	41	56	99	257	139	541	781	1	482
France	44	91	41	91	64	50	99	162	1,640	480	1	672
Mexico	304	97	252	150	244	57	19	20	1,050	1,120	1	435
Romania	95	172	38	38	--	--	76	35	461	419	(3)	187
Turkey	--	--	32,000	--	--	35,000	--	--	--	67,000	89	13,400
United Kingdom	146	197	91	73	143	183	75	59	787	907	1	623
Other	24	9	3	10	(3)	1	12	73	6,080	59	(3)	263
Total	978	1,250	33,000	1,280	1,150	36,200	1,190	725	611	75,100	100	17,600

-- Zero.

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

²Cost, insurance, and freight values at U.S. ports.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau adjusted by U.S. Geological Survey.

TABLE 4
U.S. APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH¹

(Metric tons)

Period	Production	Exports	Imports	Net stock		Apparent consumption ²
				Increase	Decrease	
2018:						
January–December	11,900,000	6,960,000	51,300	3,910	--	4,980,000
January–July	6,910,000 ^r	4,020,000	9,520	-- ^r	11,000 ^r	2,910,000 ^r
July	1,070,000	609,000	1,560	34,000	--	428,000
August	930,000	542,000	1,020	10,600	--	378,000
September	988,000	529,000	36,500	--	24,700	520,000
October	1,010,000	670,000	1,940	--	31,800	376,000
November	997,000	506,000	1,720	72,500	--	420,000
December	1,060,000	698,000	627	--	11,700	374,000
2019:						
January–July	6,780,000	4,090,000	75,100	--	47,600	2,810,000
January	1,000,000	587,000	978	2,640	--	415,000
February	920,000	621,000	1,250	--	30,500	331,000
March	941,000	508,000	33,000	6,870	--	459,000
April	999,000	562,000	1,280	60,300	--	378,000
May	994,000	641,000	1,150	--	61,600	416,000
June	946,000 ^r	614,000	36,200	12,100 ^r	--	356,000 ^r
July	972,000	557,000	1,190	--	37,500	453,000

^rRevised. -- 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	2018				2019			
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter– 4th quarter	1st quarter	2d quarter	1st quarter– 2nd quarter
3272	Glass:								
327213	Container	279	284	257	233	1,050	250	250	500
327211	Flat	222	243	240	256	960	228	234	462
327993	Fiber	39	40	43	42	165	39	41	81
327212	Other	26	25	25	26	102	27	23	50
	Total	566	591	565	557	2,280	545	548	1,090
32518	Chemicals	338	369	356	372	1,440	335	358	694
325611	Soaps and detergents	79	66	72	70	287	69	67	136
322	Pulp and paper	12	13	11	11	47	10	10	19
221310	Water treatment ³	11	12	12	9	44	10	11	21
56221	Flue gas desulfurization	47	43	52	49	191	47	38	85
4246	Distributors	79	74	75	74	302	71	61	132
	Other	71	69	65	59	265	84	74	157
	Total domestic consumption ⁴	1,200	1,240	1,210	1,200	4,850	1,170	1,170	2,340
	Exports ⁵	1,750	1,590	1,720	1,760	6,820	1,710 ^r	1,760	3,470
	Canada	47	49	47	48	190	44 ^r	49	93
	Total industry sales ⁶	2,950	2,830	2,930	2,960	11,700	2,880 ^r	2,920	5,810
	Total sales from plants	3,010	2,860	3,020	3,030	11,900	2,890	2,970	5,860
	Total production	2,960	2,880	2,990	3,020	11,800	2,860	2,940	5,800

¹Revised.

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.