

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN JULY 2015

U.S. natural soda ash production in July was 1.01 million metric tons (Mt), a 3% increase from the previous month's production and essentially unchanged compared with the production of July 2014.

Ending inventories for July 2015 were 307,000 metric tons (t), 5% more than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in July 2015 was 1.51 Mt, slightly more than that of June 2015.

Exports and imports of soda ash in June 2015 were 527,000 t and 5,030 t, respectively.

The changes in soda ash statistics for June 2015, compared with those of June 2014, were as follows: production was slightly higher; exports were 7% lower; imports were 76% higher; and apparent consumption was 15% higher. Soda ash import tonnages can vary widely from month to month, but generally are much smaller in quantity than soda ash export tonnages.

For the 6 months ending in June 2015, first half statistics compared to the same period of 2014 were: production was slightly higher; exports were slightly lower; imports were 11% higher; and apparent consumption was 5% higher.

Table 5 provides consumption statistics for the first quarter of 2015. During the first quarter, 558,000 t (47%) went to glassmaking and 351,000 t (30%) was consumed for chemicals. Total consumption was down in every end use segment except water treatment compared to the first quarter of 2014 with total consumption down by 6%. Although soda ash used in water treatment was up by about 31%, double digits decreases in consumption of soda ash were reported for fiberglass production, in pulp and paper manufacture, and for flue gas desulfurization.

All percentages in this report were computed 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	
2014: ^P			
January–July	6,710	331	10,200 ^r
July	1,000	331	1,460
August	1,030	349	1,430
September	917	352	1,420
October	985	328	1,480
November	996	346	1,450
December	1,020	271	1,300
January–December	11,700	271	17,300
2015:			
January	1,010	346	1,980
February	925	365	1,450
March	1,010	361	1,540
April	983	283	1,400
May	920	342	1,440
June	980	292	1,500
July	1,010	307	1,510
January–July	6,830	307	10,800

^PPreliminary. ^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, IN 2015^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	March	April	May	June			January–June		
						Quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
Argentina	--	13,800	--	15,500	15,800	--	--	--	45,100	1	\$9,310
Australia	33,000	27,100	32,500	--	35,100	--	--	--	128,000	4	24,700
Belgium	15,600	13,600	10,500	3,980	21,100	--	--	--	64,800	2	9,730
Brazil	109,000	86,700	74,100	75,100	103,000	59,500	\$13,300	\$223	507,000	16	103,000
Canada	20,500	19,700	23,800	21,100	19,500	21,900	4,660	213	127,000	4	26,400
Chile	--	30,200	25,000	33,700	15,200	45,900	9,850	215	150,000	5	32,600
Colombia	--	17,400	14,200	14,000	--	15,300	3,150	206	60,900	2	12,200
France	15,000	--	15,000	28	49	28	3	107	30,100	1	5,290
Indonesia	76,500	36,000	108,000	55,800	31,500	56,000	11,900	213	364,000	11	77,500
Japan	3,000	51,500	--	25,800	24,000	23,200	4,160	179	128,000	4	22,400
Korea, Republic of	15,900	31,100	--	31,500	25	30,400	5,820	192	109,000	3	21,200
Malaysia	7,500	--	16,000	--	6,500	11,000	2,330	211	41,000	1	8,610
Mexico	83,900	75,300	86,500	81,800	73,700	95,500	22,600	237	497,000	15	118,000
Netherlands	15,300	21,800	12,700	10,000	10,000	81	9	111	69,900	2	11,400
Philippines	10,000	--	8,500	7,500	--	--	--	--	26,000	1	5,290
Saudi Arabia	15,000	--	16,000	15,000	--	19,000	3,510	185	65,000	2	11,900
South Africa	12,200	--	5,420	7,500	10,300	--	--	--	35,400	1	6,790
Taiwan	29,100	10,100	15,700	36,700	24,200	10,900	2,120	194	127,000	4	24,200
Thailand	10,000	13,500	19,500	23,200	27,100	13,500	2,860	212	107,000	3	22,100
Tunisia	15,500	--	19,900	--	--	27,000	4,570	169	62,400	2	10,600
United Arab Emirates	13,500	--	9,000	32,000	--	40,700	7,570	186	95,200	3	18,700
United Kingdom	24,600	5,470	22,500	23,500	--	22,000	4,940	224	98,100	3	20,600
Venezuela	5,930	21,800	11,900	19,600	12,200	15,200	3,590	236	86,600	3	20,000
Vietnam	26,500	--	8,000	24,300	2,500	8,000	1,690	211	69,300	2	15,700
Other	7,280	28,900	9,890	71,100	15,300	11,600	2,650	229	144,000	4	28,800
Total	565,000	504,000	565,000	629,000	447,000	527,000	111,000	211	3,240,000	100	667,000

-- Zero.

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

²July 2015 data were not available at time of publication.

³Free alongside ship values at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY, IN 2015^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	March	April	May	June			January–June		
						Quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
Bulgaria	--	126	--	--	--	--	--	--	127	1	\$16
China	26	236	5	--	5	243	\$64	\$263	515	2	136
Germany	1,660	1,870	1,860	1,640	1,790	1,670	239	143	10,500	50	1480
India	--	--	--	3	4	1,330	175	132	1,340	6	185
Italy	40	494	969	722	457	760	110	145	3,440	16	480
Japan	--	--	154	39	--	2	3	1,500	195	1	47
Mexico	253	161	97	219	356	180	67	372	1,270	6	455
United Kingdom	498	146	530	735	991	821	133	162	3,720	18	658
Other	--	1	9	7 ^r	12 ^r	20	17	850	49	(4)	52
Total	2,480	3,030	3,630	3,360	3,610	5,030	808	161	21,100	100	3,510

^rRevised. -- Zero.

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

²July 2015 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	
2014:						
January–December	11,700,000	6,670,000	39,200	--	77,600	5,100,000
January–June	5,710,000	3,310,000	19,000	--	56,000 [†]	2,470,000 [†]
June	975,000	566,000	2,860	--	31,500	443,000
July	1,000,000	628,000	3,460	38,900	--	337,000
August	1,030,000	511,000	4,750	18,200	--	508,000
September	917,000	492,000	2,650	2,180	--	426,000
October	985,000	559,000	2,040	--	23,900	452,000
November	996,000	555,000	4,530	18,100	--	427,000
December	1,020,000	614,000	2,760	--	75,100	481,000
2015:						
January–June	5,820,000	3,240,000	21,100	20,900	--	2,590,000
January	1,010,000	565,000	2,480	75,600	--	368,000
February	925,000	504,000	3,030	18,700	--	405,000
March	1,010,000	565,000	3,630	--	4,080	453,000
April	983,000	629,000	3,370	--	78,200	435,000
May	920,000	447,000	3,610	59,500	--	417,000
June	980,000	527,000	5,030	--	50,600	509,000
July	1,010,000	NA	NA	15,100	--	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	2014				2015	
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter– 4th quarter	1st quarter
3272	Glass:						
327213	Container	292	299	287	276	1,150	265
327211	Flat	228	238	254	258	978	225
327993	Fiber	39	38	38	36	151	34
327212	Other	35	32	30	34	131	34
	Total	594	607	609	604	2,410	558
32518	Chemicals	374	380	401	386	1,540	351
325611	Soaps and detergents	91	83	90	88	352	83
322	Pulp and paper	17	16	16	15	64	15
221310	Water treatment ³	13	14	15	13	55	17
56221	Flue gas desulfurization	57	54	65	55	231	49
422	Distributors	75	70	71	68	284	74
	Other	54	50	59	65	228	44
	Total domestic consumption ⁴	1,270	1,270	1,330	1,290	5,170	1,190
	Exports ⁵	1,630	1,580	1,550	1,790	6,550	1,340
	Canada	63	56	54	56	229	23
	Total industry sales ⁶	2,900	2,850	2,880	3,090	11,700	2,530
	Total sales from plants	2,910	2,990	2,930	3,050	11,900	2,870
	Total production	2,910	2,790	2,950	3,000	11,700	2,940

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 powerplants 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.