

Mineral Industry Surveys

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ZINC IN MAY 2009

Domestic mine production (recoverable) of zinc in May 2009 was 56,100 metric tons (t), according to the U.S. Geological Survey. Average daily mine production in May was 1,810 t, 7% lower than that in April 2009 and 5% lower than the revised rate in May 2008.

The Platts Metals Week average price for North American Special High Grade (SHG) zinc for May 2009 was 70.05 cents per pound, 7% higher than the April 2009 average price but 32% lower than the May 2008 average price. The average London Metal Exchange Ltd. (LME) cash price of SHG zinc for May 2009 increased to \$1,483.16 per metric ton, 8% higher than the average price in April 2009 but a 32% decrease compared with the average price in May 2008. During May 2009, global LME stocks of SHG zinc declined by 5,350 t to 323,600 t.

Zinc metal producer Nyrstar NV (Balen, Belgium) announced that it had acquired the shuttered Mid-Tennessee Zinc mine complex from Strategic Resource Acquisition Corp. (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) for €10 million (about \$13.3

million). The mine complex includes the Gordonsville (established in the 1980s), Elmwood (established in the 1970s), and Cumberland (established in the 1990s) zinc mines and Gordonsville mill. Ore from the complex would be processed into a gallium- and germanium-rich zinc concentrate at the Gordonsville mill and shipped about 100 miles to Nyrstar's Clarksville, TN, zinc smelter, which was originally constructed to treat the zinc concentrates produced from those mines. Nyrstar intended to continue to keep the mines on care-and-maintenance status, but would review opportunities to resume mining as soon as commercially feasible. The complex was expected to contribute approximately 50% of the concentrate processed at Clarksville once mining activity fully recommences (Nyrstar NV, 2009).

Reference Cited

Nyrstar NV, 2009, Nyrstar acquires Mid-Tennessee Zinc mine complex in US: Balen, Belgium, Nyrstar NV news release, May 1, 3 p.

TABLE 1
SALIENT ZINC STATISTICS¹

(Metric tons, unless otherwise specified)

	2008	2009		
	January- December	April	May	January- May
Production:				
Mine, zinc content of concentrate ²	778,000	60,500	58,200	304,000
Mine, recoverable zinc ²	748,000	58,400	56,100	293,000
Smelter, refined zinc ^{e, 3}	286,000	15,300	15,300	75,100
Consumption:				
Apparent, refined zinc ⁴	1,000,000	67,200	72,600	367,000
Reported:				
Refined zinc	248,000	16,500	17,300	85,200
Ores ^c (zinc content)	732	61	61	305
Zinc-base scrap ^c (zinc content)	178,000	14,800	14,800	74,100
Copper-base scrap ^c (zinc content)	148,000	12,400	12,400	61,800
Aluminum- and magnesium-base scrap ^c (zinc content)	603	50	50	251
Total ^c	575,000	43,800	44,600	222,000
Stocks of refined zinc, end of period:				
Producer and consumer ⁵	XX	35,600	33,600	XX
Shipments of zinc metal from Government stockpile	250	--	--	1
Imports for consumption:				
Refined zinc	725,000	53,000	55,500	294,000
Oxide (gross weight)	114,000	5,090	4,550	26,000
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	63,200	14,000	--	19,400
Waste and scrap (gross weight)	17,000	865	298	3,180
Exports:				
Refined zinc	3,250	68	191	817
Oxide (gross weight)	39,900	1,070	1,360	5,930
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	725,000	4,240	20,100	84,100
Waste and scrap (gross weight)	91,000	3,500	3,680	15,400
Price:⁶				
London Metal Exchange cash, average, dollars per metric ton	1,874.20	1,378.44	1,483.16	1,275.35
Platts Metals Week North American, average, cents per pound	88.93	65.30	70.05	60.75

⁶Estimated. XX Not applicable. -- Zero.

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

²Partially estimated.

³Includes zinc metal used to manufacture zinc oxide.

⁴Smelter production plus imports minus exports plus shipments from Government stockpile plus stock change.

⁵Does not include an estimate for companies that report annually.

⁶Special High Grade Zinc.

TABLE 2
APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF REFINED ZINC ACCORDING
TO INDUSTRY USE AND PRODUCT¹

(Metric tons)

	2008	2009		January- May
	January- December	April	May	
Galvanizing:				
Sheet and strip	438,000	30,900	32,500	166,000
Other	168,000	11,500	12,400	63,400
Total	606,000	42,500	44,900	229,000
Brass and bronze	165,000	10,900	12,800	61,800
Zinc-base alloy	149,000	10,100	10,900	55,600
Other uses ²	81,600	3,740	4,090	20,400
Grand total	1,000,000	67,200	72,600	367,000

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

²Includes zinc used in making zinc dust, desilvering lead, powder, alloys, anodes, chemicals, casting, light metal alloys, rolled zinc, and miscellaneous uses not elsewhere specified.

TABLE 3
SHIPMENTS OF ZINC METAL FROM THE NATIONAL
DEFENSE STOCKPILE¹

(Metric tons)

Period	Shipments	Ending inventory ²
2008:		
May	41	7,600
June	--	7,600
July	101	7,500
August ³	--	7,500
September	--	7,500
October	8 ⁴	7,490
November	--	7,490
December	--	7,490
January-December	250	XX
2009:		
January	--	7,490
February	--	7,490
March	1 ⁴	7,490
April	--	7,490
May	--	7,490
January-May	1	XX

XX Not applicable. -- Zero.

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

²Includes only uncommitted inventory.

³On August 6, 2008, the Defense National Stockpile Center announced that sales of zinc from the National Defense Stockpile were suspended until further notice.

⁴Inventory reconciliation.

Source: Defense National Stockpile Center.

TABLE 4
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ZINC¹

(Gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material	2008		2009			
	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	May		Year to date	
			Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	63,200	\$73,200	--	--	19,400	\$13,400
Unwrought:						
Refined (slab) zinc	725,000	1,480,000	55,500	\$78,000	294,000	362,000
Zinc alloys	7,170	14,900	160	259	1,250	1,720
Wrought:						
Bars, rods, profiles, wire	2,330	6,860	125	285	747	1,640
Plates, sheets, strip, foil	3,330	17,100	305	1,420	1,660	7,860
Other:						
Dross, ashes, fume (zinc content)	13,200	17,200	554	435	3,240	2,840
Powders, flakes, dust	28,500	81,200	1,990	4,020	8,830	16,000
Waste and scrap	17,000	20,300	298	258	3,180	2,520
Chemicals:						
Oxide	114,000	192,000	4,550	6,340	26,000	33,900
Chloride	462	1,780	24	81	107	381
Sulfate	41,900	45,700	2,740	1,890	14,200	10,300
Compounds, other ²	4,600	7,650	420	426	1,410	1,850

-- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

²Includes zinc sulfide (HTS 2830.90.1000 and 2830.90.1500), chromates of zinc or of lead (HTS 2841.90.4500), and lithopone and other pigments and preparations based on zinc sulfide (HTS 3206.42.0000).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
U.S. IMPORTS OF ZINC, BY TYPE OF MATERIAL AND COUNTRY¹

(Metric tons, gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material and country	General imports			Imports for consumption		
	2008	2009		2008	2009	
		May	Year to date		May	Year to date
Ore and concentrate (zinc content):						
Canada	7,480	--	1,550	7,480	--	1,550
Mexico	2,730	--	5,410	2,730	--	5,410
Peru	53,000	--	12,400	53,000	--	12,400
Total	63,200	--	19,400	63,200	--	19,400
Refined (slab) zinc:						
Argentina	5,010	--	--	5,010	--	--
Australia	--	--	--	25	--	--
Belgium	908	--	--	908	--	--
Brazil	982	--	--	982	--	--
Canada	563,000	42,300	225,000	563,000	42,300	225,000
China	215	304	308	1,370	304	308
Germany	1	--	--	1	--	--
Italy	17	--	--	17	--	--
Japan	1,220	101	191	1,220	101	191
Kazakhstan	38,100	--	493	38,100	--	493
Korea, Republic of	--	--	--	702	--	--
Mexico	90,800	5,180	41,700	90,800	5,180	41,700
Peru	21,200	7,650	25,700	21,200	7,650	25,800
Spain	--	--	--	40	--	--
Sweden	2	--	--	2	--	--
Taiwan	18	--	1	18	--	1
Uzbekistan	2,260	--	--	2,260	--	--
Total	724,000	55,500	294,000	725,000	55,500	294,000
Dross, ashes, fume (zinc content)	13,200	554	3,240	13,200	554	3,240
Grand total	800,000	56,100	316,000	802,000	56,100	317,000
Oxide:						
Australia	81	--	338	81	--	338
Belgium	11,600	19	38	11,600	19	38
Canada	40,400	2,210	12,900	40,400	2,210	12,900
China	346	37	120	346	37	120
Germany	1,150	1	58	1,150	1	58
Italy	25,100	2	2	25,100	2	2
Japan	1,490	117	608	1,490	117	608
Mexico	26,100	2,060	10,500	26,100	2,060	10,500
Netherlands	5,470	48	1,320	5,470	48	1,320
Norway	3	--	2	3	--	2
Peru	1,150	54	139	1,150	54	139
Spain	681	--	--	681	--	--
United Kingdom	76	--	9	76	--	9
Other	234	--	--	234	--	--
Total	114,000	4,550	26,000	114,000	4,550	26,000

-- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 6
U.S. EXPORTS OF ZINC¹

(Gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material	2008		2009			
	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	May		Year to date	
			Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	725,000	\$598,000	20,100	\$17,100	84,100	\$53,600
Unwrought:						
Refined (slab) zinc	3,250	3,260	191	208	817	858
Zinc alloys	8,550	22,800	267	602	1,480	3,200
Wrought:						
Bars, rods, profiles, wire	28,100	47,500	1,340	2,240	6,680	11,800
Plates, sheets, strip, foil	4,970	20,900	737	1,780	2,260	6,280
Other:						
Dross, ashes, fume (zinc content)	10,500	5,120	1,130	1,140	3,380	2,900
Powders, flakes, dust	13,000	28,500	813	1,700	4,050	7,590
Waste and scrap	91,000	99,100	3,680	4,010	15,400	15,800
Chemicals:						
Oxide	39,900	61,700	1,360	2,230	5,930	10,100
Chloride	1,830	2,110	147	235	857	1,160
Sulfate	578	799	87	110	357	563
Compounds, other ²	7,210	11,900	557	1,210	2,040	4,980

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

²Includes zinc sulfide (Schedule B 2830.90.1000 and 2830.90.1500), chromates of zinc or of lead (Schedule B 2841.90.4500), and lithopone and other pigments and preparations based on zinc sulfide (Schedule B 3206.42.0000).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 7
AVERAGE PRICES FOR SPECIAL HIGH GRADE ZINC

Period	North American ¹ ¢/lb.	London Metal Exchange cash ²	
		¢/lb.	\$/t
2008:			
May	102.80	98.96	2,181.63
June	89.93	85.91	1,893.89
July	88.02	84.00	1,851.88
August	82.17	78.14	1,722.70
September	82.72	78.70	1,735.05
October	63.01	59.03	1,301.49
November	55.84	52.26	1,152.16
December	53.42	49.90	1,100.01
January-December	88.93	85.01	1,874.20
2009:			
January	56.94	53.85	1,187.11
February	53.44	50.43	1,111.75
March	58.03	55.17	1,216.31
April	65.30	62.53	1,378.44
May	70.05	67.28	1,483.16
January-May	60.75	57.85	1,275.35

¹Platts Metals Week North American price. Based on the London Metal Exchange cash price plus premiums or discounts, depending on market conditions.

²Average of the cash buyer price and the cash seller and settlement price.

Source: Platts Metals Week.