

Mineral Industry Surveys

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ZINC IN APRIL 2017

Domestic mine production (recoverable) of zinc in April 2017 was 63,500 metric tons (t) (table 2). Average daily mine production in April was 2,120 t, 9% more than that in March and 5% less than that in April 2016 (fig. 1).

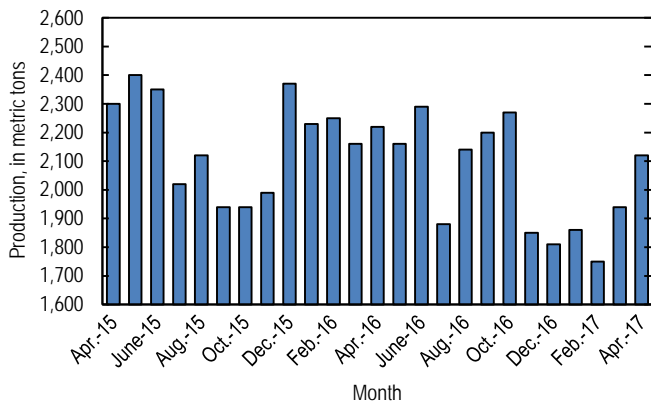


Figure 1. Average daily domestic zinc mine production (recoverable) from April 2015 through April 2017. Source: U.S. Geological Survey.

Global London Metal Exchange Ltd. (LME) stocks of Special High Grade (SHG) zinc decreased by 22,725 t to 348,225 t in April, 6% less than stocks at the end of March 2017 and 13% less than stocks at the end of April 2016 (fig. 2, table 7).

The monthly average Platts Metals Week North American SHG zinc price in April 2017 was \$1.28 per pound, a 5% decrease from that in March 2017 and 41% more than that in April 2016. The April 2017 average LME cash price for SHG zinc was \$2,632.50 per metric ton, a 5% decrease from that in the previous month and 42% more than that in April 2016.

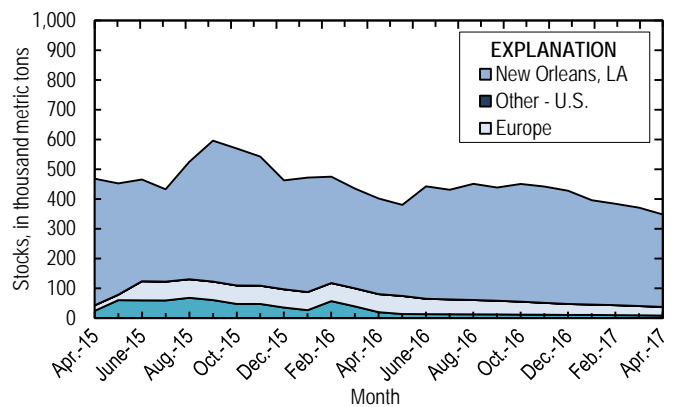


Figure 2. Global LME stocks of Special High Grade zinc, monthend, from April 2015 through April 2017. Source: London Metal Exchange Ltd.

The North American premium to the LME cash price in April averaged about 8.34 cents per pound, a 6% increase from that in March and 28% more than that in April 2016 (fig. 3, table 6). Zinc supply in the United States remained tight in April and May, primarily owing to the ongoing strike at Noranda Income Fund's (Canada) zinc-processing facility and decreased on-warrant zinc ingots in LME-approved warehouses in New Orleans, LA (Dent, 2017).

Reference Cited

Dent, Millicent, 2017, Zinc premium falls on weak demand: American Metal Market, May 30. (Accessed June 12, 2014, via <http://www.amm.com/>.)

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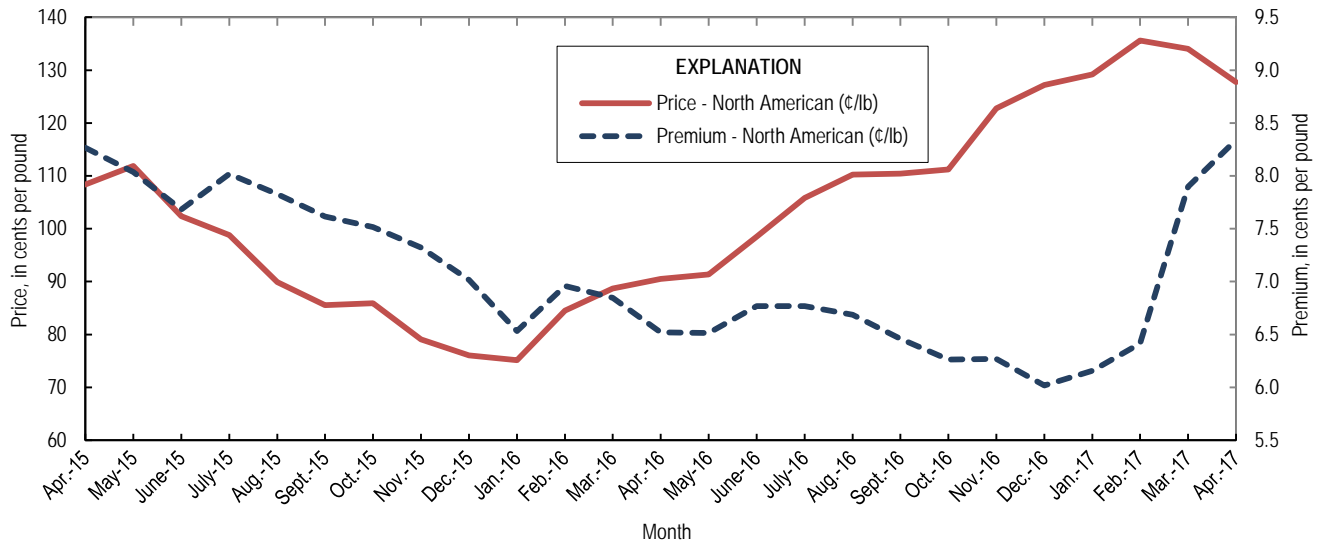


Figure 3. Average monthly North American price and premium for Special High Grade zinc from April 2015 through April 2017. Source: Platts Metals Week.

TABLE 1
SALIENT ZINC STATISTICS¹

(Metric tons, unless otherwise specified)

	2016	2017		
	January– December ^p	March	April	January– April ²
Production:				
Mine, zinc content of concentrate ³	805,000 ^r	62,100 ^r	65,600	238,000
Mine, recoverable zinc ³	778,000 ^r	60,000 ^r	63,500	230,000
Smelter, refined zinc ^e	126,000	10,900	10,900	43,700
Consumption of refined zinc, apparent ⁴	792,000 ^r	96,100	76,700	336,000
Imports for consumption:				
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	60	7	--	30
Refined zinc	713,000	89,300	68,400	307,000
Exports:				
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	597,000 ^r	18,900	12,500	67,900
Refined zinc	46,900 ^r	4,100	2,630	14,100
Price:⁵				
London Metal Exchange cash, average, dollars per metric ton	2,090.34	2,781.33	2,632.50	2,743.64
Platts Metals Week North American, average, cents per pound	101.37	134.06	127.75	131.65

^eEstimated. ^pPreliminary. ^rRevised. -- Zero.

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

²May include revisions to previously published data.

³Reported zinc content in both zinc and lead concentrates.

⁴Smelter production plus imports for consumption minus domestic exports.

⁵Special High Grade Zinc.

TABLE 2
MINE AND SMELTER PRODUCTION OF ZINC
IN THE UNITED STATES¹

(Metric tons)

Period	Mine ²		
	Zinc content	Recoverable	Smelter ^e
2016:			
April	68,800	66,600	10,600
May	69,100	66,900	10,600
June	71,000	68,600	10,600
July	60,200	58,200	9,580
August	68,500	66,300	9,580
September	68,300	66,100	9,580
October	72,700	70,300	11,300
November	57,400	55,500	11,300
December	58,100 ^r	56,200 ^r	11,300
January–December	805,000 ^r	778,000 ^r	126,000
2017:			
January	59,600 ^r	57,700 ^r	10,900
February	50,700 ^r	49,100 ^r	10,900
March	62,100 ^r	60,000 ^r	10,900
April	65,600	63,500	10,900
January–April	238,000	230,000	43,700

^eEstimated. ^rRevised.

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

²Includes the zinc content in both lead and zinc concentrates.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ZINC¹

(Gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material	2016		2017			
	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	April		January–April ²	
			Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	60	\$15	--	--	30	\$7,910
Unwrought:						
Refined zinc	713,000	1,500,000 ^r	68,400	\$193,000	307,000	840,000
Zinc alloys	7,570 ^r	15,600 ^r	479	1,360	2,660	7,530
Wrought:						
Bars, rods, profiles, wire	2,740 ^r	8,370 ^r	210	738	938	3,430
Plates, sheets, strip, foil	3,650	12,000	199	892	895	3,490
Ash and residues:						
Hard zinc spelter	247	392	57	95	114	221
Zinc dross and skimmings	3,770	5,620	441	882	2,340	4,450
Other (zinc content)	1,180 ^r	886	2	3	1,060	590
Other:						
Powders, flakes, dust	27,800	85,400	2,240	8,240	8,710	30,800
Waste and scrap	11,300	12,800	761	1,410	2,490	5,560
Chemicals:						
Lithopone	2,670 ^r	6,310	23	33	976	643
Zinc oxide	123,000	239,000	9,690	25,500	38,100	96,100
Zinc chloride	137	1,290	13	115	44	361
Zinc sulfate	79,900 ^r	60,400 ^r	5,380	5,240	26,700	24,000
Zinc sulfide	579 ^r	1,600 ^r	280	836	755	2,060

^rRevised. -- Zero.

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

²May include revisions to previously published data.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
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		
	2016	2017		2016	2017	
		April	January–April ²		April	January–April ²
Ore and concentrate (zinc content):						
Canada	--	--	23	--	--	23
Japan	10	--	--	10	--	--
Korea, Republic of	50	--	--	50	--	--
Peru	--	--	7	--	--	7
Total	60	--	30	60	--	30
Refined zinc:						
Australia	26,000	21,700	47,700	29,200	21,700	103,000
Belgium	--	--	--	2,190	18	1,790
Canada	506,000	33,800	149,000	506,000	33,800	149,000
China	5	--	1	405	198	679
India	3,020	--	2,500	3,020	--	2,500
Japan	--	--	--	397	--	--
Korea, Republic of	6	--	--	9,310	50	1,220
Mexico	88,800	8,970	26,700	88,800	8,970	26,700
Namibia	--	--	--	123	--	--
Netherlands	--	--	--	346	369	708
Peru	66,600	2,840	17,400	66,600	2,840	17,400
Poland	294	292	292	294	292	292
Spain	--	--	--	6,190	172	3,730
Taiwan	31	--	6	31	--	6
Other (5 countries)	5 ^r	--	(3)	5 ^r	--	(3)
Total	691,000	67,600	244,000	713,000	68,400	307,000
Oxide:						
Australia	97	(3)	16	97	(3)	16
Belgium	12	--	2	12	--	2
Canada	69,100	5,620	22,500	69,100	5,620	22,500
China	428	19	63	427	19	63
France	31	(3)	(3)	31	(3)	(3)
Germany	2,490	467	1,070	2,490	467	1,070
India	101	--	--	101	--	--
Indonesia	27	--	--	27	--	--
Israel	34	--	--	34	--	--
Japan	352	67	181	352	67	181
Korea, Republic of	14	6	6	14	6	6
Mexico	35,100	2,430	11,100	35,100	2,430	11,100
Netherlands	5,390	755	2,590	5,390	755	2,590
Peru	9,180	319	430	9,180	319	430
Russia	11	--	--	11	--	--
Switzerland	8	--	--	8	--	--
Taiwan	10	--	--	10	--	--
Thailand	14	2	2	14	2	2
United Kingdom	273	--	182	273	--	182
Other (4 countries)	4	--	9	4	--	9
Total	123,000	9,690	38,100	123,000	9,690	38,100

^rRevised. -- Zero.

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

²May include revisions to previously published data.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
U.S. EXPORTS OF ZINC¹

(Gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material	2016		2017			
	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	April		January–April ²	
			Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	597,000 ^r	\$938,000 ^r	12,500	\$27,400	67,900	\$101,000
Unwrought:						
Refined zinc	46,900 ^r	95,300 ^r	2,630	6,550	14,100	38,000
Zinc alloys	16,200	40,900	1,160	3,440	4,830	14,200
Wrought:						
Bars, rods, profiles, wire	8,100	20,200	684	1,660	2,580	6,590
Plates, sheets, strip, foil	6,960	23,900	575	2,250	2,500	9,520
Ash and residues:						
Hard zinc spelter	12,100	18,200	320	647	2,320	4,510
Other (zinc content)	22,800	29,900	1,360	2,260	5,710	9,070
Other:						
Powders, flakes, dust	12,700	39,600	1,010	3,350	4,140	13,300
Waste and scrap	30,100	37,800	2,600	2,610	8,870	11,300
Chemicals:						
Lithopone	1,260	7,160	65	408	317	1,900
Zinc oxide	55,300 ^r	56,300	4,520	6,040	18,400	25,200
Zinc chloride	856 ^r	1,130	12	25	52	117
Zinc sulfate	588	850	112	151	304	425
Zinc sulfide	1,040	14,500 ^r	47	1,160	199	4,980

^rRevised.

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

²May include revisions to previously published data.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 6
AVERAGE PRICES FOR SPECIAL HIGH GRADE ZINC

Period	North American ¹	London Metal Exchange cash ²	
	¢/lb.	¢/lb.	\$/t
2016:			
April	90.48	83.97	1,851.12
May	91.38	84.86	1,870.86
June	98.51	91.74	2,022.59
July	105.85	99.08	2,184.43
August	110.22	103.53	2,282.40
September	110.44	103.98	2,292.44
October	111.22	104.95	2,313.83
November	122.77	116.50	2,568.41
December	127.19	121.17	2,671.34
January–December	101.37	94.82	2,090.34
2017:			
January	129.20	123.05	2,712.68
February	135.60	129.18	2,848.04
March	134.06	126.16	2,781.33
April	127.75	119.41	2,632.50
January–April	131.65	124.45	2,743.64

¹Platts Metals Week North American price. Based on the London Metal Exchange cash price plus premium.

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

Source: Platts Metals Week.

TABLE 7
LONDON METAL EXCHANGE (LME) STOCKS OF SPECIAL HIGH GRADE ZINC, END OF PERIOD

(Metric tons)

Period	New Orleans, LA	Total	Europe	Other	Total LME
2016:					
April	321,000	321,000	60,700	20,100	401,800
May	305,775	305,775	60,700	13,975	380,450
June	377,450	377,450	51,700	13,550	442,700
July	368,150	368,150	49,850	13,200	431,200
August	390,000	390,000	48,250	12,850	451,100
September	380,025	380,025	46,050	12,600	438,675
October	395,225	395,225	43,550	11,950	450,725
November	390,475	390,475	39,875	11,650	442,000
December	380,125	380,125	36,750	10,975	427,850
2017:					
January	350,325	350,325	34,775	10,975	396,075
February	340,400	340,400	33,500	10,200	384,100
March	330,100	330,100	31,200	9,650	370,950
April	310,350	310,350	29,150	8,725	348,225

Source: London Metal Exchange, Ltd.