

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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## ZINC IN MAY 2017

Domestic mine production (recoverable) of zinc in May 2017 was 53,300 metric tons (t) (table 2). Average daily mine production in May was 1,780 t, 14% less than that in April and 18% less than that in May 2016 (fig. 1).

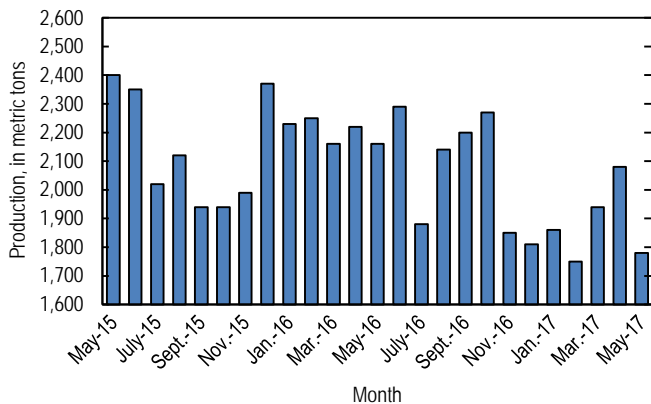


Figure 1. Average daily domestic zinc mine production (recoverable) from May 2015 through May 2017. Source: U.S. Geological Survey.

Global London Metal Exchange Ltd. (LME) stocks of Special High Grade (SHG) zinc decreased by 18,300 t to 329,925 t in May, 5% less than stocks at the end of April 2017 and 13% less than stocks at the end of May 2016 (fig. 2, table 7).

The monthly average Platts Metals Week North American SHG zinc price in May 2017 was \$1.26 per pound, a slight decrease from that in April 2017 and 38% more than that in May 2016. The May 2017 average LME cash price for SHG zinc was \$2,589.77 per metric ton, a slight decrease from that in the previous month and 38% more than that in May 2016.

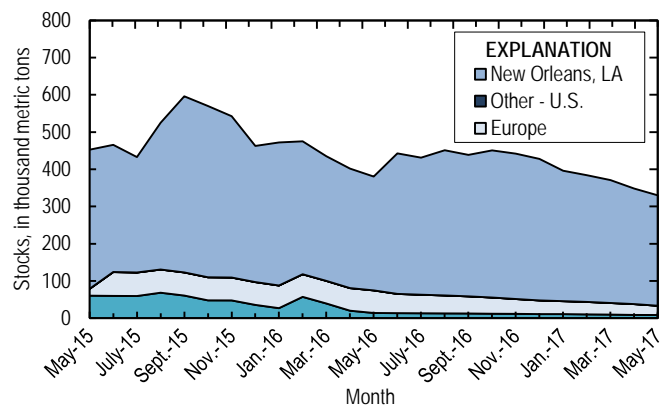


Figure 2. Global LME stocks of Special High Grade zinc, monthend, from May 2015 through May 2017. Source: London Metal Exchange Ltd.

The North American premium to the LME cash price in May averaged about 8.56 cents per pound, a slight increase from that in April and 31% more than that in May 2016 (fig. 3, table 6). Zinc supply in the United States reportedly remained tight through June, as demonstrated by a 29% decrease of on-warrant zinc ingots in LME-approved warehouses in New Orleans, LA, since January 2017. The ongoing strike at Noranda Income Fund’s (Canada) zinc refinery in Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, Quebec, Canada, which is now in its fifth month, may contribute to further increases in the North American premium in the next few months (Dent, 2017b).

**Update**

In June, American Zinc Recycling LLC (Pittsburgh, PA) announced that its Mooresboro, NC, secondary zinc refinery was not expected to restart operations before 2018. The plant was idled in January 2016, and an engineering evaluation to determine the feasibility and cost to reopen was ongoing (Dent, 2017a).

In June and July, Nyrstar NV (Belgium) completed the sale of two mines. On June 14, Nyrstar completed the sale of its Campo Morado Mine in Mexico to Telson Resources Inc. (Canada) and Reynas Minas SA de CV (Mexico). Mining at Campo Morado has been suspended since the first quarter of 2015 (Singh, 2017). On July 3, Nyrstar announced the completion of the sale of its Coricancha Mine in Peru to Great Panther Silver Limited (Canada). The mine was acquired by Nyrstar in October 2009 and has been on care-and-maintenance status since August 2013 (Teo, 2017).

**References Cited**

Dent, Millicent, 2017a, Mooresboro zinc plant won't reopen before 2018: American Metal Market, June 26. (Accessed June 26, 2017, via <http://www.amm.com/>.)  
 Dent, Millicent, 2017b, Zinc stocks in New Orleans tumble amid tight supply: American Metal Market, June 29. (Accessed June 30, 2017, via <http://www.amm.com/>.)  
 Singh, Shivani, 2017, Nyrstar sells Campo Morado mine for \$20M: American Metal Market, June 14. (Accessed July 6, 2017, via <http://www.amm.com/>.)  
 Teo, Vivian, 2017, Nyrstar completes sale of Coricancha mine: American Metal Market, July 3. (Accessed July 6, 2017, via <http://www.amm.com/>.)

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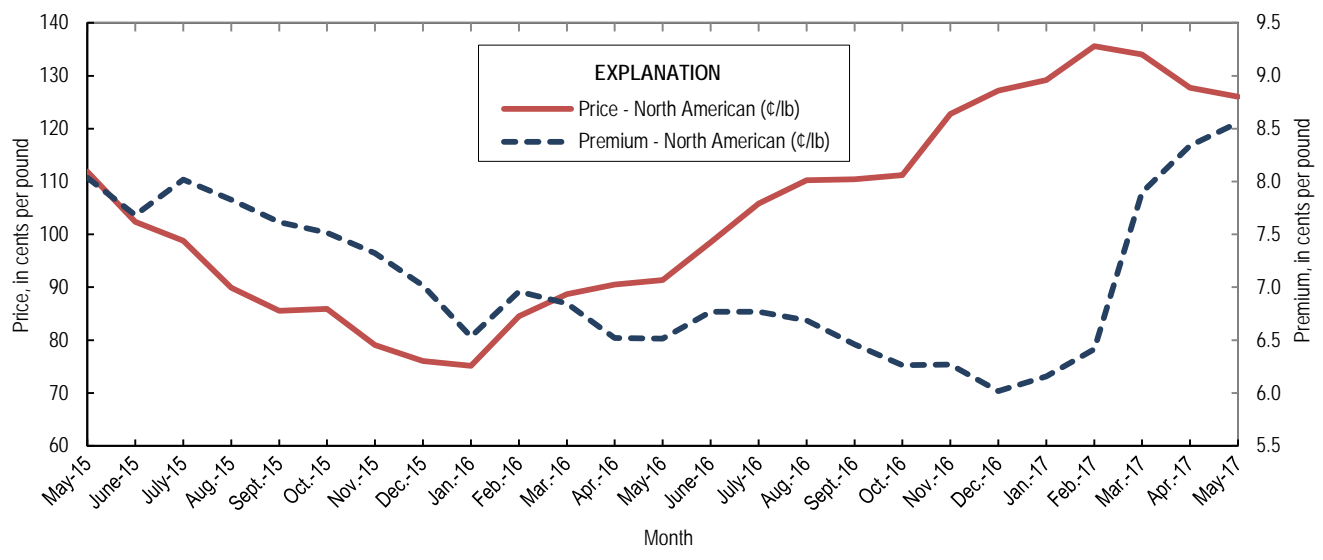


Figure 3. Average monthly North American price and premium for Special High Grade zinc from May 2015 through May 2017. Source: Platts Metals Week.

TABLE 1  
SALIENT ZINC STATISTICS<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons, unless otherwise specified)

	2016	2017		
	January– December <sup>p</sup>	April	May	January– May <sup>2</sup>
<b>Production:</b>				
Mine, zinc content of concentrate <sup>3</sup>	805,000	64,300 <sup>r</sup>	55,100	292,000
Mine, recoverable zinc <sup>3</sup>	778,000	62,300 <sup>r</sup>	53,300	282,000
Smelter, refined zinc <sup>c</sup>	126,000	10,900	10,900	54,600
Consumption of refined zinc, apparent <sup>4</sup>	792,000	76,700	64,000	400,000
<b>Imports for consumption:</b>				
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	60	--	--	30
Refined zinc	713,000	68,400	54,600	361,000
<b>Exports:</b>				
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	597,000	12,500	8,660	76,600
Refined zinc	46,900	2,630	1,560	15,700
<b>Price:<sup>5</sup></b>				
London Metal Exchange cash, average, dollars per metric ton	2,090.34	2,632.50	2,589.77	2,712.86
Platts Metals Week North American, average, cents per pound	101.37	127.75	126.03	130.53

<sup>c</sup>Estimated. <sup>p</sup>Preliminary. <sup>r</sup>Revised. -- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>May include revisions to previously published data.

<sup>3</sup>Reported zinc content in both zinc and lead concentrates.

<sup>4</sup>Smelter production plus imports for consumption minus domestic exports.

<sup>5</sup>Special High Grade Zinc.

TABLE 2  
MINE AND SMELTER PRODUCTION OF ZINC  
IN THE UNITED STATES<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons)

Period	Mine <sup>2</sup>		
	Zinc content	Recoverable	Smelter <sup>e</sup>
<b>2016:</b>			
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	56,200	11,300
January–December	805,000	778,000	126,000
<b>2017:</b>			
January	59,600	57,700	10,900
February	50,700	49,100	10,900
March	62,100	60,000	10,900
April	64,300 <sup>r</sup>	62,300 <sup>r</sup>	10,900
May	55,100	53,300	10,900
January–May	292,000	282,000	54,600

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. <sup>r</sup>Revised.

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

<sup>2</sup>Includes the zinc content in both lead and zinc concentrates.

TABLE 3  
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ZINC<sup>1</sup>

(Gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material	2016		2017			
	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	May		January–May <sup>2</sup>	
			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	54,600	\$148,000	361,000	987,000
Zinc alloys	7,570	15,600	947	2,530	3,610	10,100
Wrought:						
Bars, rods, profiles, wire	2,740	8,370	451	1,640	1,390	5,070
Plates, sheets, strip, foil	3,650	12,000	634	2,380	1,530	5,870
Ash and residues:						
Hard zinc spelter	247	392	76	122	190	344
Zinc dross and skimmings	3,770	5,620	720	1,300	3,060	5,750
Other (zinc content)	1,180	886	11	4	1,070	593
Other:						
Powders, flakes, dust	27,800	85,400	2,380	8,090	11,100	38,900
Waste and scrap	11,300	12,800	1,030	1,620	3,520	7,190
Chemicals:						
Lithopone	2,670	6,310	45	66	1,020	708
Zinc oxide	123,000	239,000	10,400	26,500	48,500	123,000
Zinc chloride	137	1,290	24	229	69	590
Zinc sulfate	79,900	60,400	6,980	6,950	33,600	30,900
Zinc sulfide	579	1,600	108	461	864	2,520

-- Zero.

<sup>1</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

<sup>2</sup>May include revisions to previously published data.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4  
U.S. IMPORTS OF ZINC, BY TYPE OF MATERIAL AND COUNTRY<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons, gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material and country	General imports			Imports for consumption		
	2016	2017		2016	2017	
		May	January–May <sup>2</sup>		May	January–May <sup>2</sup>
<b>Ore and concentrate (zinc content):</b>						
Canada	--	--	23	--	--	23
Japan	10	--	--	10	--	--
Korea, Republic of	50	--	--	50	--	--
Peru	--	--	7	--	--	7
Total	60	--	30	60	--	30
<b>Refined zinc:</b>						
Australia	26,000	--	47,700	29,200	--	103,000
Belgium	--	--	--	2,190	--	1,790
Canada	506,000	34,900	184,000	506,000	34,900	184,000
China	5	2	3	405	2	681
India	3,020	1,990	4,480	3,020	1,990	4,480
Japan	--	--	--	397	--	--
Korea, Republic of	6	--	--	9,310	--	1,220
Mexico	88,800	8,120	34,800	88,800	8,120	34,800
Namibia	--	--	--	123	126	126
Netherlands	--	--	--	346	622	1,330
Peru	66,600	6,150	23,500	66,600	6,150	23,500
Poland	294	--	292	294	--	292
Spain	--	--	--	6,190	2,410	6,130
Taiwan	31	10	15	31	10	15
Other (5 countries)	5	253	254	4	253	254
Total	691,000	51,400	295,000	713,000	54,600	361,000
<b>Oxide:</b>						
Australia	97	3	19	97	3	19
Belgium	12	--	2	12	--	2
Canada	69,100	5,910	28,400	69,100	5,910	28,400
China	428	23	86	427	23	86
France	31	--	(3)	31	--	(3)
Germany	2,490	190	1,270	2,490	190	1,270
India	101	16	16	101	16	16
Indonesia	27	--	--	27	--	--
Israel	34	--	--	34	--	--
Japan	352	39	220	352	39	220
Korea, Republic of	14	6	11	14	6	11
Mexico	35,100	2,840	14,000	35,100	2,840	14,000
Netherlands	5,390	1,320	3,900	5,390	1,320	3,900
Peru	9,180	56	486	9,180	56	486
Russia	11	--	--	11	--	--
Switzerland	8	--	--	8	--	--
Taiwan	10	--	--	10	--	--
Thailand	14	--	2	14	--	2
United Kingdom	273	--	182	273	--	182
Other (4 countries)	4	--	9	4	--	9
Total	123,000	10,400	48,500	123,000	10,400	48,500

-- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>May include revisions to previously published data.

<sup>3</sup>Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5  
U.S. EXPORTS OF ZINC<sup>1</sup>

(Gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material	2016		2017			
	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	May		January–May <sup>2</sup>	
			Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	597,000	\$938,000	8,660	\$14,600	76,600	\$115,000
Unwrought:						
Refined zinc	46,900	95,300	1,560	3,670	15,700	41,700
Zinc alloys	16,200	40,900	1,270	3,460	6,100	17,600
Wrought:						
Bars, rods, profiles, wire	8,100	20,200	782	1,890	3,360	8,480
Plates, sheets, strip, foil	6,960	23,900	827	3,030	3,330	12,500
Ash and residues:						
Hard zinc spelter	12,100	18,200	1,130	1,700	3,450	6,210
Other (zinc content)	22,800	29,900	1,980	3,140	7,700	12,200
Other:						
Powders, flakes, dust	12,700	39,600	1,220	3,670	5,360	17,000
Waste and scrap	30,100	37,800	2,290	3,380	11,200	14,700
Chemicals:						
Lithopone	1,260	7,160	65	379	382	2,280
Zinc oxide	55,300	56,300	4,420	5,550	22,800	30,700
Zinc chloride	856	1,130	55	91	108	208
Zinc sulfate	588	850	26	35	330	460
Zinc sulfide	1,040	14,500	53	1,160	252	6,140

<sup>1</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

<sup>2</sup>May include revisions to previously published data.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 6  
AVERAGE PRICES FOR SPECIAL HIGH GRADE ZINC

Period	North	London Metal Exchange	
	American <sup>1</sup>	cash <sup>2</sup>	
	¢/lb.	¢/lb.	\$/t
2016:			
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
May	126.03	117.47	2,589.77
January–May	130.53	123.05	2,712.86

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

<sup>2</sup>Average 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	United States		Europe	Other	Total LME
	New Orleans, LA	Total			
<b>2016:</b>					
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
<b>2017:</b>					
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
May	296,475	296,475	24,900	8,550	329,925

Source: London Metal Exchange, Ltd.