

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SULFUR IN FEBRUARY 2012

During February 2012, production of recovered elemental sulfur was 636,000 metric tons (t), which was 7% lower than that of January 2012 and 12% higher than that of February 2011. Shipments were 630,000 t, which was 9% lower than those of January 2012. Producers' ending stocks for February 2012 were 168,000 t.

Imports of recovered sulfur for February 2012 were estimated to be 263,000 t; exports were 66,000 t. Imports of sulfuric acid for February 2012 were 203,000 t; exports were 10,000 t.

U.S. sulfur consumption, calculated as shipments minus exports plus imports, was 827,000 t in February 2012. This was slightly higher than that of January 2012 and about 17% higher than that of February 2011.

Significant adjustments have been made to the sulfur import data. The U.S. Census Bureau appears to underreport sulfur imports, especially material from Canada. The revised figures are based on Census information and data from personal communications with industry experts.

TABLE 1
SALIENT SULFUR STATISTICS¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Production			Shipments, all sources	Stocks, end of period ³
	Petroleum ²	Natural gas	Total		
2011:					
January–December	7,080	1,130	8,210	8,190	176
January–February	1,100	198 ^r	1,300 ^r	1,310	137
February	474 ^r	93 ^r	568 ^r	577	137
March	564	96	659	647	150
April	545	98	644	650	144
May	585	96	681	682	143
June	620	76	697	698	140
July	614	92	705	681	164
August	623	98	720	731	159
September	586	93	678	676	156
October	602	86	688	687	161
November	590	94	684	689	157
December	656	101	756	738	176
2012:					
January	584 ^r	98	682 ^r	696 ^r	161
February ^p	540	96	636	630	168
Total	1,120	194	1,320	1,330	168

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised.

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

²Includes a small quantity from coking operations.

³Subject to inventory adjustments.

TABLE 2
U.S. IMPORTS OF SULFUR¹

(Thousand metric tons and thousand dollars)

Period	Canada		Mexico		Venezuela		Total, all countries ²	
	Quantity ^e	Value ³	Quantity	Value ³	Quantity ^e	Value ³	Quantity ^e	Value ³
2011:								
January–December	2,700	188,000	303	54,500	99	16,400	3,270	301,000
January–February	420 ^r	20,800	43	6,360	13	1,600	524 ^r	38,900
February	200	10,700	14	2,750	--	--	252	21,400
March	220	25,100	44	5,940	--	--	275	33,500
April	220	13,800	29	4,940	18	3,430	268	22,700
May	230	14,700	29	6,190	--	--	260	21,600
June	220	14,400	14	2,760	15	2,750	315	37,300
July	240	18,100	29	5,910	--	--	270	24,500
August	240	17,800	14	3,330	15	2,720	308	33,500
September	230	15,600	29	5,400	8	1,510	267	22,900
October	230	16,300	14	3,240	--	--	245	19,800
November	220	13,700	29	5,420	10	1,370	259	20,800
December	230	17,600	29	5,010	20	2,970	279	25,800
2012:								
January	240 ^r	13,700	29	5,230	--	--	269 ^r	19,200
February	220	12,800	29	3,930	13	1,820	263	18,900
Total	460	26,500	58	9,160	13	1,820	532	38,100

^eEstimated. ^rRevised -- Zero.

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

²May include other countries not listed.

³Declared customs valuation.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau data as adjusted by U.S. Geological Survey and ICIS PentaSul North America Sulphur Service.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS OF SULFURIC ACID¹

(Thousand metric tons and thousand dollars)

Period	Canada			Mexico			Total, all countries ²		
	Quantity	Sulfur content	Value ³	Quantity	Sulfur content	Value ³	Quantity	Sulfur content	Value ³
2011:									
January–December	1,820	596	158,000	433	142	29,400	2,670	871	244,000
January–February	302	99	22,900	41	13	2,600	440	144 ^r	37,300
February	152	50	11,400	14	5	989	234	76	19,800
March	146	48	11,700	58	19	3,310	254	83	22,200
April	145	47	8,780	47	15	3,400	229	75	18,100
May	135	44	7,460	40	13	2,950	229	75	17,000
June	116	38	7,670	39	13	2,750	221	72	18,100
July	157	51	16,000	23	8	1,570	205	68	23,800
August	169	55	18,500	46	15	3,250	237	78	25,600
September	141	46	15,600	30	10	2,130	175	57	19,600
October	179	59	17,600	35	11	2,440	230	75	21,600
November	155	51	14,600	31	10	2,180	188	61	17,100
December	178	58	16,900	43	14	2,860	257	84	23,200
2012:									
January	192	63	16,600	32	10	2,320	291	95	26,500
February	146	48	12,300	39	13	2,870	203	66	17,800
Total	338	111	28,900	71	23	5,190	494	161	44,300

^rRevised.

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

²May include other countries not listed.

³Declared customs valuation.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. EXPORTS OF SULFUR AND SULFURIC ACID¹

(Thousand metric tons and thousand dollars)

Period	Sulfur		Sulfuric acid		
	Quantity	Value ²	Quantity	Sulfur content	Value ²
2011:					
January–December	1,310	266,000	332	109	41,500
January–February	208	34,800	48	16	5,790
February	122	20,900	28	9	3,470
March	114	20,500	22	7	3,220
April	123	26,100	40	13	3,840
May	52	11,400	27	9	3,180
June	189	34,500	26	8	3,410
July	61	15,600	30	10	3,790
August	116	24,900	68	22	5,100
September	160	30,100	24	8	3,740
October	79	17,900	11	4	1,830
November	117	26,500	23	8	5,510
December	90	23,400	13	4	2,080
2012:					
January	155	32,900	15	5	2,760
February	66	11,000	10	3	2,030
Total	221	43,900	25	8	4,790

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

²Declared f.a.s. (free alongside ship) valuation.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
U.S. CONSUMPTION OF SULFUR¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Domestic sources ²	Imports ^e	Consumption
2011:			
January–December	6,880	3,270	10,100
January–February	1,100	524 ^r	1,630 ^r
February	455	252	707
March	533	275	808
April	527	268	795
May	630	260	890
June	509	315	824
July	620	270	890
August	615	308	923
September	516	267	783
October	608	245	853
November	572	259	831
December	648	279	927
2012:			
January ^r	541	269	810
February	564 ^p	263	827
Total	1,110	532	1,640

^eEstimated. ^pPreliminary. ^rRevised.

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

²Calculated as shipments minus exports.

TABLE 6
RECOVERED SULFUR PRODUCED AND SHIPPED IN THE UNITED STATES,
BY PAD (PETROLEUM ADMINISTRATION FOR DEFENSE) DISTRICT¹

(Thousand metric tons)

District and source	January–February 2011 ²		January 2012		February 2012 ^p		January–February 2012 ^{p, 2}	
	Production	Shipments	Production	Shipments	Production	Shipments	Production	Shipments
PAD 1:								
Petroleum and coke	11	11	7	8	7	7	14	14
Natural gas	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2
Total	13	13	8	9	8	8	17	17
PAD 2:								
Petroleum and coke	160	164	86	87	92	91	178	178
Natural gas	3	3	2	1	1	1	3	3
Total	163	167	87	88	93	93	181	181
PAD 3: ³								
Petroleum and coke	727	735	389	399	333	329	722	728
Natural gas	74	74	39	39	37	38	76	77
Total	801	810	429	438	370	368	798	805
PAD 4 and 5:								
Petroleum and coke	201	200	102 ^r	106 ^r	108	106	210	212
Natural gas	118	119	56	56	56	55	112	111
Total	319	319	158 ^r	161 ^r	164	161	322	323
Grand total	1,300	1,310	682 ^r	696 ^r	636	630	1,320	1,330

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised.

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

²May include revisions to previously published data.

³Includes the U.S. Virgin Islands.

TABLE 7
COMPARATIVE SULFUR AND SULFURIC ACID STATISTICS¹

(Million metric tons per year [annualized basis] and dollars per metric ton for period shown)

	2011	2012		
		January	February	Total
Production	8.21	8.03 ^r	8.00 ^p	8.02
Shipments	8.19	8.19 ^r	7.93 ^p	8.06
Exports of sulfur	1.31	1.83	0.83	1.34
Imports of sulfur:				
Canada ^e	2.70	2.83 ^r	2.77	2.80
Mexico	0.30	0.34	0.37	0.35
Venezuela ^e	0.10	--	0.16	0.08
Total ^{e, 2}	3.27	3.17 ^r	3.31	3.24
Exports of H ₂ SO ₄	0.33	0.18	0.13	0.15
Imports of H ₂ SO ₄ :				
Canada	1.82	2.26	1.84	2.06
Mexico	0.43	0.38	0.49	0.43
Total ²	2.67	3.43	2.56	3.01
Consumption:				
Domestic sources	6.88	6.37 ^r	7.10	6.72
Imports ^e	3.27	3.17 ^r	3.31	3.24
Total	10.20	9.54 ^r	10.40	9.96
Sulfur export values ³	203	212	167	199
Sulfur import values: ³				
Canada	70	57 ^r	58	58
Mexico	180	180	136	158
Venezuela	165	XX	140	140
Average ²	92	71 ^r	72	72
H ₂ SO ₄ export values ³	125	184	203	191
H ₂ SO ₄ import values: ³				
Canada	86	86	84	85
Mexico	68	72	74	73
Average ²	91	91	87	90

^eEstimated. ^pPreliminary. ^rRevised. XX Not applicable. -- Zero.

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

²Includes other countries not listed.

³Average value per ton.