

Mineral Industry Surveys

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ZINC IN DECEMBER 2011

Domestic mine production (recoverable) of zinc in December 2011 was 67,800 metric tons (t). Average daily mine production in December was 2,190 t, 12% higher than that in November 2011 and 9% higher compared to that in December 2010. U.S. mine production of zinc in 2011 was 3% higher than that in 2010 owing to increased zinc production in Alaska, Missouri, and Tennessee.

The Platts Metals Week average price for North American Special High Grade (SHG) zinc for December 2011 was 94.35

cents per pound, slightly lower than the November 2011 average price and 13% lower than the December 2010 average price. The average London Metal Exchange Ltd. (LME) cash price of SHG zinc for December 2011 was \$1,915.85 per metric ton, almost unchanged from the average price in November 2011 and 16% lower compared with the average price in December 2010. During December 2011, global LME stocks of SHG zinc increased by 78,950 t to 820,300 t.

TABLE 1
SALIENT ZINC STATISTICS¹

(Metric tons, unless otherwise specified)

	2010	2011		
	January– December	November	December	January– December
Production:				
Mine, zinc content of concentrate ²	748,000	60,500 ^r	70,100	771,000
Mine, recoverable zinc ²	723,000	58,500 ^r	67,800	744,000
Smelter, refined zinc ^{e, 3}	248,000	25,000 ^r	25,000	252,000
Consumption of refined zinc:				
Apparent ⁴	919,000	69,000 ^r	87,200	923,000
Reported ⁵	234,000	25,800 ^r	24,600	310,000
Reported stocks of refined zinc, end of period, producer and consumer ⁵	37,900	85,200	85,700	85,700
Shipments of zinc metal from Government stockpile	1	--	--	--
Imports for consumption:				
Refined zinc	671,000	49,100	64,000	716,000
Oxide (gross weight)	94,300	6,680	5,450	90,000
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	32,200	689	3,250	26,700
Waste and scrap (gross weight)	15,600	2,000	1,930	18,500
Exports:				
Refined zinc	4,200	1,410	1,320	19,000
Oxide (gross weight)	16,700	2,150	7,640	31,600
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	752,000	14,200	3,300	660,000
Waste and scrap (gross weight)	77,900	6,140	7,460	85,600
Price:⁶				
London Metal Exchange cash, average, dollars per metric ton	2,160.31	1,915.69	1,915.85	2,192.89
Platts Metals Week North American, average, cents per pound	101.98	94.41	94.35	106.23

^eEstimated. ^rRevised. -- Zero.

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

²Reported zinc content in both zinc and lead concentrates.

³Includes zinc metal used to manufacture zinc oxide.

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

⁵Includes estimates for respondents that report annually.

⁶Special High Grade Zinc.

TABLE 2
MINE PRODUCTION OF ZINC IN THE UNITED STATES^{1,2}

(Metric tons)

Period	Zinc content	Recoverable
2010:		
December	64,500	62,300
January–December	748,000	723,000
2011:		
January	70,900	68,500
February	57,000	54,900
March	64,300	62,100
April	61,700	59,600
May	68,500	66,200
June	59,900	57,900
July	72,500	70,100
August	65,900	63,600
September	62,200	60,000
October	57,200 ^r	55,200 ^r
November	60,500 ^r	58,500 ^r
December	70,100	67,800
January–December	771,000	744,000

^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
APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF REFINED ZINC ACCORDING
TO INDUSTRY USE AND PRODUCT¹

(Metric tons)

	2010		2011	
	January– December	November ^r	December	January– December
Galvanizing:				
Sheet and strip	410,000	34,400	41,900	447,000
Other	151,000	10,000	14,000	140,000
Total	561,000	44,400	55,900	586,000
Brass and bronze	158,000	9,870	12,800	138,000
Zinc-base alloy	142,000	10,400	14,100	142,000
Other uses ²	58,300	4,390	4,380	56,300
Grand total	919,000	69,000	87,200	923,000

^rRevised.

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 4
SHIPMENTS OF ZINC METAL FROM THE NATIONAL
DEFENSE STOCKPILE¹

(Metric tons)

Period	Shipments	Ending inventory ²
2010:		
December	--	7,490
January–December	1	7,490
2011:		
January	--	7,490
February	--	7,490
March	--	7,490
April	--	7,490
May	--	7,490
June	--	7,490
July	--	7,490
August	--	7,490
September	--	7,490
October	--	7,490
November	--	7,490
December	--	7,490
January–December	--	7,490

-- Zero.

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

²Includes only uncommitted inventory.

Source: DLA Strategic Materials.

TABLE 5
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ZINC¹
(Gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material	2010		2011			
	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	December		January–December	
			Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	32,200	\$43,700	3,250	\$4,440	26,700	\$43,000
Unwrought:						
Refined (slab) zinc	671,000	1,450,000	64,000	125,000	716,000	1,610,000
Zinc alloys	7,220	15,900	4,630	9,170	47,400	106,000
Wrought:						
Bars, rods, profiles, wire	2,630	7,710	211	637	2,680	8,120
Plates, sheets, strip, foil	3,440	15,300	204	976	3,650	16,500
Other:						
Dross, ashes, fume (zinc content)	17,900	19,200	1,960	1,990	14,400	17,600
Powders, flakes, dust	31,600	88,400	1,610	4,440	30,100	89,300
Waste and scrap	15,600	19,400	1,930	2,370	18,500	23,400
Chemicals:						
Oxide	94,300	185,000	5,450	9,740	90,000	181,000
Chloride	405	1,290	5	46	255	1,290
Sulfate	37,500	32,300	6,600	6,050	53,900	51,700
Compounds, other ²	4,040	7,030	212	313	3,850	6,620

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 6
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		
	2010	2011		2010	2011	
		December	January–December		December	January–December
Ore and concentrate (zinc content):						
Canada	64	399	4,650	64	399	4,650
Mexico	20	--	2,800	20	--	2,800
Netherlands	89	--	81	89	--	81
Peru	32,100	2,850	17,800	32,100	2,850	17,800
Turkey	--	--	1,270	--	--	1,270
United Kingdom	--	--	155	--	--	155
Total	32,200	3,250	26,700	32,200	3,250	26,700
Refined (slab) zinc:						
Australia	--	--	4,000	--	--	13,500
Brazil	3,010	--	8,050	3,010	--	8,050
Canada	506,000	38,500	448,000	506,000	38,500	448,000
China	180	9	65	216	9	65
Japan	3,990	--	1,420	3,990	--	1,490
Kazakhstan	1,000	--	--	1,000	--	--
Korea, Republic of	--	--	--	310	--	12,000
Mexico	79,500	7,590	88,700	79,500	7,590	88,700
Namibia	--	12,000	59,500	--	12,000	59,500
Peru	24,900	5,940	61,900	28,100	5,940	62,300
Russia	4,740	--	1,480	4,740	--	1,480
South Africa	508	--	--	508	--	--
Spain	47	--	--	43,600	--	21,600
Other	60	31	66	107	31	66
Total	623,000	64,000	673,000	671,000	64,000	716,000
Dross, ashes, fume (zinc content)	17,900	1,960	14,400	17,900	1,960	14,400
Grand total	674,000	69,200	714,000	721,000	69,200	757,000
Oxide:						
Argentina	464	--	--	464	--	--
Australia	173	55	1,310	173	55	1,310
Belgium	242	155	1,170	242	155	1,170
Brazil	322	--	--	322	--	--
Canada	50,900	2,750	45,000	50,900	2,750	45,000
China	1,650	74	566	1,650	74	566
Germany	818	123	3,390	818	123	3,390
Indonesia	--	--	107	--	--	107
Japan	2,700	226	2,490	2,700	226	2,490
Mexico	27,700	1,950	27,700	27,700	1,950	27,700
Netherlands	5,550	99	4,060	5,550	99	4,060
Peru	2,390	--	2,000	2,390	--	2,000
Spain	728	--	144	728	--	144
Turkey	310	20	1,780	310	20	1,780
United Arab Emirates	--	--	140	--	--	140
United Kingdom	121	--	16	121	--	16
Other	332	4	147	332	4	147
Total	94,300	5,450	90,000	94,300	5,450	90,000

-- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 7
U.S. EXPORTS OF ZINC¹

(Gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material	2010		2011			
	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	December		January–December	
			Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	752,000	\$903,000	3,300	\$5,360	660,000	\$997,000
Unwrought:						
Refined (slab) zinc	4,200	4,320	1,320	1,300	19,000	19,800
Zinc alloys	11,400	29,300	950	2,510	13,500	34,900
Wrought:						
Bars, rods, profiles, wire	27,800	53,300	1,390	2,230	25,700	39,100
Plates, sheets, strip, foil	7,380	21,900	997	2,450	8,730	26,000
Other:						
Dross, ashes, fume (zinc content)	13,500	10,700	1,860	1,570	19,700	11,700
Powders, flakes, dust	14,900	33,600	1,180	2,780	15,600	34,000
Waste and scrap	77,900	85,200	7,460	8,000	85,600	93,900
Chemicals:						
Oxide	16,700	36,700	7,640	8,330	31,600	51,300
Chloride	1,930	2,950	146	229	1,800	2,860
Sulfate	1,870	2,360	59	83	285	588
Compounds, other ²	6,360	11,700	411	653	5,630	8,800

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 8
AVERAGE PRICES FOR SPECIAL HIGH GRADE ZINC

Period	North American ¹	London Metal Exchange cash ²	
	¢/lb.	¢/lb.	\$/t
2010:			
December	108.46	103.43	2,280.29
January–December	101.98	97.99	2,160.31
2011:			
January	112.57	107.55	2,370.96
February	117.03	111.80	2,464.70
March	112.36	106.54	2,348.91
April	114.01	107.59	2,372.00
May	104.41	97.98	2,160.01
June	108.38	101.15	2,230.08
July	115.93	108.41	2,389.99
August	107.83	100.30	2,211.33
September	101.70	94.18	2,076.40
October	91.83	84.31	1,858.77
November	94.41	86.89	1,915.69
December	94.35	86.90	1,915.85
January–December	106.23	99.47	2,192.89

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.