

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN NOVEMBER 2018

U.S. natural soda ash production in November was 997,000 metric tons (t), a slight decrease compared with that of the previous month's production and that of November 2017. Ending stocks were 336,000 t, 38% more than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in November 2018 was 1.49 Mt, slightly less than that of October 2018 but 6% more than that of November 2017 (table 1).

This report includes trade data for both October (tables 2a and 3a) and November (tables 2b and 3b). In succeeding soda ash monthly reports, trade data will be published for the current month, a change from the historical reports, which included trade information from the previous month.

Exports of soda ash in October 2018 were 670,000 t, 27% more than those of September 2018 and 13% more than those of October 2017 (tables 2a, 4). Exports of soda ash in November 2018 were 506,000 t, 25% less than those of October 2018 and 17% less than those of November 2017 (tables 2b, 4).

October 2018 imports of soda ash were 1,940 t, 29% more than those of September 2018 and 50% more than those of October 2017 (tables 3a, 4). November 2018 imports of soda ash were 1,720 t, 11% less than those of October 2018 and more than double those of November 2017 (tables 3b, 4). Soda ash import tonnages can differ significantly from month to month, but generally are much smaller than soda ash export tonnages.

Apparent consumption for October 2018 was 376,000 t, a 22% decrease from that of September 2018 and a 19% decrease from that of October 2017. Apparent consumption for November 2018 was 400,000 t, a 7% increase from that of October 2018 and a 8% increase from that of November 2017. Apparent consumption can change significantly from month to month mostly owing to changes in the quantity of exports but usually stabilizes over the course of the year. For the first 11 months of 2018, apparent consumption was 4.54 Mt, slightly less than that of the same period of 2017 (table 4).

Table 5 provides reported soda ash consumption statistics for the third quarter of 2018. During the third quarter, 623,000 t (47%) went to glassmaking and 393,000 t (29%) was consumed in the production of chemicals.

All percentages in this report were calculated using unrounded data.

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TABLE 1
SALIENT SODA ASH STATISTICS¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Soda ash		Wyoming trona production
	Production ²	Stocks, end of period	
2017:			
January–November	10,900	259	16,300
November	1,000	259	1,400
December	1,100	293	1,710
January–December	12,000	293	18,000
2018:			
January	992	324 ^r	1,630
February	945	320 ^r	1,490
March	1,020	247 ^r	1,620
April	966 ^r	275 ^r	1,480
May	952	267 ^r	1,450
June	961	256 ^r	1,420
July	1,070	290 ^r	1,490
August	930	299 ^r	1,180
September	988	275 ^r	1,320
October	1,010 ^r	243 ^r	1,500 ^r
November	997	336	1,490
January–November	10,800	336	16,100

^rRevised.

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

²Production data include soda ash equivalent from soda liquors only. Soda ash equivalent from mine water is not included. Soda liquors are withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

TABLE 2a
U.S. EXPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY, IN 2018¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October			January–October		
										Quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)
Argentina	78	20	18,700	8,500 ^r	17,200	11,700	6,560	--	6,060	8,600	\$2,050	\$238	77,400	1	\$17,300
Australia	40,000	--	28,300	--	33,000	33,000	26,500	--	41,500	--	--	--	202,000	4	42,400
Belgium	213	--	126	189	822	108	502	339	218	84	9	110	2,600	(3)	286
Brazil	102,000	68,400	62,100	117,000	30,200	81,700	65,200	74,100	23,000	139,000	27,700	199	763,000	13	150,000
Canada	18,100	17,900	17,900	19,400	21,300	13,200	17,000	14,200	17,600	16,100	3,580	223	173,000	3	35,900
Chile	39,600	8,100	45,900	59,400	34,600	38,400	49,400	--	51,700 ^r	40,300	8,560	212	367,000	6	79,900
China	--	50,100	60	47,100	60	10,100	--	40,100	47,100	62	17	266	195,000	3	33,400
Colombia	27,500	12,000	21,500	18,700	5,060	21,500	--	22,100	--	31,400	7,460	237	160,000	3	33,400
Costa Rica	5,000	--	5,000	--	--	5,000	--	5,500	--	6,000	1,560	260	26,500	(3)	6,090
Ecuador	6,000	--	4,000	--	7,150	--	--	8,200	--	7,150	1,770	247	32,500	(3)	6,660
El Salvador	--	--	5,000	--	--	3,000	5,000	--	--	--	--	--	13,000	(3)	2,600
Guatemala	3,500	--	8,600 ^r	--	8,860	5,000	7,700	--	--	11,200	2,490	222	44,900	1	9,890
India	29,000	--	28,500	--	--	--	16,000	--	10,000	19,000	3,190	168	103,000	2	15,800
Indonesia	23,500	112,000	45,000	53,200	48,900	18,700	68,500	15,700	67,300	37,000	7,920	214	490,000	9	105,000
Ireland	101	--	262	108	40	69	22	100	--	192	48	250	893	(3)	220
Japan	40,100	21,500	30,500	3,500	26,000	32,300	22,800	21,900	6,780	42,100	7,450	177	247,000	4	44,800
Korea, Republic of	17,000	15,000	18,700	21,500	27,700	18,000	31,700	34,100	39,100	27,300	5,330	195	250,000	4	48,800
Malaysia	3,000	31,000	34,200	35,500	28,100	23,000	46,000	45,000	14,000	60,600	12,300	202	320,000	6	66,100
Mexico	99,300	83,800	114,000	98,400	109,000	130,000	118,000	109,000	111,000	111,000	26,500	238	1,080,000	19	253,000
Netherlands	--	--	12,000	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	12,000	(3)	2,400
New Zealand	--	--	6,000	--	--	--	7,600	--	--	--	--	--	13,600	(3)	2,340
Nigeria	--	--	10,000	8,000	134	--	8,000	--	--	--	--	--	26,100	(3)	8,080
Peru	15,000	--	13,500	75	22,200	75	75	15,100	75	17,100	3,750	219	83,100	1	18,300
Philippines	7,000	--	8,000	--	9,000	--	--	9,500	11,000	--	--	--	44,500	1	9,630
Poland	216	--	--	--	216	--	--	216	--	471	52	110	1,120	(3)	123
Saudi Arabia	857	11,100	11,600	98	59	23,500	--	271	4,500	1,830	201	110	53,800	1	8,210
Singapore	--	46	98	51	--	55	160	94	710	286	31	110	1,500	(3)	392
South Africa	7,530	11,200	14,900	8,460	--	7,480	--	7,580	7,830	7,500	1,220	162	72,500	1	14,300
Spain	--	--	45	742	--	136	45	--	--	--	--	--	968	(3)	106
Taiwan	22,500	6,000	27,300	5,500	28,000	--	25,000	14,300	17,500	28,700	6,200	216	175,000	3	36,400
Thailand	33,000	25,500	18,400	21,000	42,100	17,000	24,000	34,900	36,900	36,400	9,130	251	289,000	5	64,500
Tunisia	--	--	--	25,000	--	--	27,000	--	--	--	--	--	52,000	1	11,500
United Arab Emirates	10,000	16,000	19,500	--	--	18,500	--	--	10,500	--	--	--	74,500	1	12,000
United Kingdom	8,520	5,070	16,100	--	15,400	--	14,200	--	--	--	--	--	59,400	1	11,400

See footnotes at end of table.

TABLE 2a—Continued.
U.S. EXPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY, IN 2018¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	Quantity	October		January–October		
											Value ² (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)
Venezuela	--	5,170	--	12,300	--	--	--	11,100	5,070	--	--	--	33,600	1	8,720
Vietnam	--	35,400	25,000	24,100	29,000	--	21,500	59,000	--	20,000	4,440	222	214,000	4	45,900
Other	--	80	2	18	290	22	--	98	92	363	40	110	966	(3)	207
Total	559,000	536,000	671,000	588,000	544,000	512,000	609,000	542,000	530,000	670,000	143,000	214	5,760,000	100	1,210,000

¹Revised. -- Zero.

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

²Free alongside ship values at U.S. ports.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 2b
U.S. EXPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY, IN 2018¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November			January–November		
											Quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)
Argentina	78	20	18,700	8,500	17,200	11,700	6,560	--	6,060	8,600	--	--	--	77,400	1	\$17,300
Australia	40,000	--	28,300	--	33,000	33,000	26,500	--	41,500	--	35,000	7,000	\$200	237,000	4	49,400
Belgium	213	--	126	189	822	108	502	339	218	84	129	14	110	2,730	(3)	300
Brazil	102,000	68,400	62,100	117,000	30,200	81,700	65,200	74,100	23,000	139,000	14,100	6,000	426	777,000	12	156,000
Canada	18,100	17,900	17,900	19,400	21,300	13,200	17,000	14,200	17,600	16,100	17,700	3,930	222	190,000	3	39,800
Chile	39,600	8,100	45,900	59,400	34,600	38,400	49,400	--	51,700	40,300	13,900	2,990	215	381,000	6	82,800
China	--	50,100	60	47,100	60	10,100	--	40,100	47,100	62	59,100	10,400	176	254,000	4	43,800
Colombia	27,500	12,000	21,500	18,700	5,060	21,500	--	22,100	--	31,400	--	--	--	160,000	3	33,400
Costa Rica	5,000	--	5,000	--	--	5,000	--	5,500	--	6,000	--	--	--	26,500	(3)	6,090
Dominican Republic	--	--	--	--	287	--	--	--	--	363	280	31	110	930	(3)	102
Ecuador	6,000	--	4,000	--	7,150	--	--	8,200	--	7,150	--	--	--	32,500	(3)	6,660
El Salvador	--	--	5,000	--	--	3,000	5,000	--	--	--	--	--	--	13,000	(3)	2,600
Guatemala	3,500	--	8,600	--	8,860	5,000	7,700	--	--	11,200	--	--	--	44,900	1	9,890
India	29,000	--	28,500	--	--	--	16,000	--	10,000	19,000	34	4	110	103,000	2	15,800
Indonesia	23,500	112,000	45,000	53,200	48,900	18,700	68,500	15,700	67,300	37,000	76,400	16,500	215	567,000	9	122,000
Ireland	101	--	262	108	40	69	22	100	--	192	--	--	--	893	(3)	220
Japan	40,100	21,500	30,500	3,500	26,000	32,300	22,800	21,900	6,780	42,100	3,760	754	201	251,000	4	45,600
Korea, Republic of	17,000	15,000	18,700	21,500	27,700	18,000	31,700	34,100	39,100	27,300	18,800	3,770	200	269,000	4	52,600
Malaysia	3,000	31,000	34,200	35,500	28,100	23,000	46,000	45,000	14,000	60,600	26,000	5,290	203	346,000	6	71,400
Mexico	99,300	83,800	114,000	98,400	109,000	130,000	118,000	109,000	111,000	111,000	96,200	23,400	243	1,180,000	19	276,000
Netherlands	--	--	12,000	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	12,000	(3)	2,400
New Zealand	--	--	6,000	--	--	--	7,600	--	--	--	--	--	--	13,600	(3)	2,340
Nigeria	--	--	10,000	8,000	134	--	8,000	--	--	--	--	--	--	26,100	(3)	8,080
Peru	15,000	--	13,500	75	22,200	75	75	15,100	75	17,100	--	--	--	83,100	1	18,300
Philippines	7,000	--	8,000	--	9,000	--	--	9,500	11,000	--	11,000	2,470	224	55,500	1	12,100
Poland	216	--	--	--	216	--	--	216	--	471	--	--	--	1,120	(3)	123
Saudi Arabia	857	11,100	11,600	98	59	23,500	--	271	4,500	1,830	4,720	712	151	58,500	1	8,920
Singapore	--	46	98	51	--	55	160	94	710	286	492	54	110	1,990	(3)	446
South Africa	7,530	11,200	14,900	8,460	--	7,480	--	7,580	7,830	7,500	--	--	--	72,500	1	14,300
Spain	--	--	45	742	--	136	45	--	--	--	--	--	--	968	(3)	106
Taiwan	22,500	6,000	27,300	5,500	28,000	--	25,000	14,300	17,500	28,700	9,000	1,990	222	184,000	3	38,400
Thailand	33,000	25,500	18,400	21,000	42,100	17,000	24,000	34,900	36,900	36,400	30,400	6,430	211	320,000	5	71,000
Tunisia	--	--	--	25,000	--	--	27,000	--	--	--	25,000	5,490	220	77,000	1	16,900
United Arab Emirates	10,000	16,000	19,500	--	--	18,500	--	--	10,500	--	15,500	2,360	153	90,000	1	14,300
United Kingdom	8,520	5,070	16,100	--	15,400	--	14,200	--	--	--	15,000	2,980	199	74,400	1	14,400

See footnotes at end of table.

TABLE 2b—Continued.
U.S. EXPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY, IN 2018¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November		January–November			
											Quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)
Venezuela	--	5,170	--	12,300	--	--	--	11,100	5,070	--	--	--	--	33,600	1	8,720
Vietnam	--	35,400	25,000	24,100	29,000	--	21,500	59,000	--	20,000	33,500	7,180	214	247,000	4	53,100
Other	--	80	2	18	3	22	--	98	92	--	103,353	24	234	419	(³)	160
Total	559,000	535,000	671,000	588,000	544,000	512,000	608,000	542,000	530,000	670,000	506,000	110,000	217	6,260,000	100	1,320,000

-- Zero.

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

²Free alongside ship values at U.S. ports.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3a
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY, IN 2018¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	Quantity	October		January–October		
											Value ² (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)
Bulgaria	342	342	738	451	342	126	612	324	450	270	\$99	\$366	4,000	29	\$1,400
China	57	257	336	228	241	76	100	93	152	150	76	508	1,690	12	1,050
France	--	62	69	69	19	19	69	19	--	39	20	--	363	3	209
Germany	1	3	1	4	61	3	2	--	1	2	53	22,100	78	1	339
Italy	190	342	190	21	398	791	604	--	17	931	219	235	3,490	25	677
Japan	5	--	4	7	13	--	6	15	15	8	39	4,910	74	1	197
Mexico	72	182	267	470	136	132	36	422	497	240	91	381	2,460	18	898
Poland	--	--	--	--	116	--	58	57	152	--	--	--	383	3	164
Romania	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	57	152	64	--	210	1	90
United Kingdom	94	91	94	286	86	73	70	92	161	143	87	606	1,190	8	784
Other	16	3	10	8	8	11	4	--	2	1	2	2,690	63	(3)	84
Total	776	1,280	1,710	1,540 [†]	1,420	1,230	1,560	1,020	1,510	1,940	751	388	14,000	100	5,890

[†]Revised. -- Zero.

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

²Cost, insurance, and freight values at U.S. ports.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3b
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY, IN 2018¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November			January–November		
											Quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)
Bulgaria	342	342	738	451	342	126	612	324	450	270	414	\$151	\$366	4,410	28	\$1,550
China	57	257	336	228	241	76	100	93	152	150	135	87	640	1,830	12	1,140
France	--	62	69	69	19	19	69	19	--	39	175	88	--	538	3	297
Germany	1	3	1	4	61	3	2	--	1	2	2	36	15,900	80	1	375
Italy	190	342	190	21	398	791	604	--	17	931	532	125	234	4,020	26	802
Japan	5	--	4	7	13	--	6	15	15	8	--	--	--	74	(3)	197
Mexico	72	182	267	470	136	132	36	422	497	240	340	120	354	2,800	18	1,020
Poland	--	--	--	--	116	--	58	57	152	--	--	--	--	383	2	164
Romania	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	57	152	--	--	--	210	1	90
United Kingdom	94	91	94	286	86	73	70	92	161	143	115	86	750	1,300	8	870
Other	16	3	10	8	8	11	4	--	2	1	5	8	1,640	68	(3)	92
Total	776	1,280	1,710	1,540	1,420	1,230	1,560	1,020	1,510	1,940	1,720	702	408	15,700	100	6,590

-- Zero.

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

²Cost, insurance, and freight values at U.S. ports.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH¹

(Metric tons)

Period	Production	Exports	Imports	Net stock		Apparent consumption ²
				Increase	Decrease	
2017:						
January–December	12,000,000	6,990,000	19,100	--	42,700	5,040,000
January–October	9,860,000	5,760,000	18,000	--	99,500	4,220,000
January–November	10,900,000	6,370,000	18,600	--	77,000	4,590,000
October	1,040,000	591,000	1,290	--	14,400	462,000
November	1,000,000	612,000	658	22,500	--	370,000
December	1,100,000	615,000	481	34,300	--	449,000
2018:						
January–October	9,840,000	5,760,000	14,000	--	50,300	4,140,000
January–November	10,800,000	6,270,000	15,700	42,100	--	4,540,000
January	992,000	559,000	776	30,100 ^r	--	404,000 ^r
February	945,000	536,000	1,280	--	3,100 ^r	414,000 ^r
March	1,020,000	671,000	1,710	--	73,500 ^r	424,000 ^r
April	966,000 ^r	588,000	1,550	27,600 ^r	--	352,000 ^r
May	952,000	544,000	1,420	--	8,070 ^r	417,000 ^r
June	961,000	512,000	1,230	--	10,400	461,000
July	1,070,000	609,000	1,560	34,000	--	428,000
August	930,000	542,000	1,020	8,900 ^r	--	380,000 ^r
September	988,000	530,000	1,510	--	24,200 ^r	484,000
October	1,010,000 ^r	670,000	1,940	--	31,700 ^r	376,000
November	997,000	506,000	1,720	92,400	--	400,000

^rRevised. -- Zero.

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

²Production plus imports minus exports plus or minus stock changes.

TABLE 5
 REPORTED CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH IN THE UNITED STATES, BY END USE, BY QUARTER¹
 (Thousand metric tons)

NAICS ² code	End use	2017					2018			
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter– 4th quarter	1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	1st quarter– 3d quarter
3272	Glass:									
327213	Container	273	296	284	271	1,120	307 ^r	313 ^r	283	904
327211	Flat	242	252	235	259	989	244 ^r	268 ^r	264	776
327993	Fiber	36	36	36	36	144	43 ^r	44 ^r	47	135
327212	Other	27	27	25	26	105	29 ^r	27 ^r	28	84
	Total	577	611	581	592	2,360	624 ^r	652 ^r	623	1,900
32518	Chemicals	344	338	333	352	1,370	373 ^r	407 ^r	393	1,170
325611	Soaps and detergents	73	74	73	73	293	87 ^r	73 ^r	80	240
322	Pulp and paper	10	9	12	9	40	14 ^r	15 ^r	12	40
221310	Water treatment ³	8	9	9	11	37	13 ^r	14 ^r	13	39
56221	Flue gas desulfurization	54	50	61	51	215	51 ^r	48 ^r	57	157
4246	Distributors	78	73	71	66	288	87 ^r	82 ^r	83	252
	Other	65	75	83	84	307	78 ^r	76 ^r	72	227
	Total domestic consumption ⁴	1,210	1,240	1,220	1,240	4,910	1,330 ^r	1,370 ^r	1,330	4,030
	Exports ⁵	1,690	1,630	1,830	1,790	6,940	1,930 ^r	1,750 ^r	1,890	5,570
	Canada	53	46	50	48	197	51 ^r	54 ^r	52	156
	Total industry sales ⁶	2,890	2,870	3,060	3,030	11,800	3,250 ^r	3,120 ^r	3,230	9,590
	Total sales from plants	2,920	2,930	3,170	3,090	12,100	3,320 ^r	3,160 ^r	3,330	9,810
	Total production	2,860	2,960	3,010	3,140	12,000	3,260 ^r	3,170 ^r	3,290	9,730

^rRevised.

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

²North American Industry Classification System.

³Includes soda ash equivalent from soda liquors and purge liquors sold to power plants for water treatment. Sales of mine water are excluded.

⁴Imports reported by the producer/importer have been distributed into appropriate end-use categories listed above.

⁵As reported by producers; includes Canada. Data may not necessarily agree with those reported by the U.S. Census Bureau for the same periods.

⁶Represents soda ash from domestic origin (production and inventory changes) and imports and exports. Includes soda ash sold by coproducers and distributed by purchasers into appropriate end-use categories.