

Mineral Industry Surveys

For information, contact:

E. Lee Bray, Aluminum Commodity Specialist
 National Minerals Information Center
 U.S. Geological Survey
 989 National Center
 Reston, VA 20192
 Telephone: (703) 648-4979, Fax: (703) 648-7757
 Email: lbray@usgs.gov

Susan M. Weaver (Data)
 Telephone: (703) 648-7979
 Fax: (703) 648-7995
 Email: sweaver@usgs.gov

Internet: <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic>

ALUMINUM IN JANUARY 2020

Domestic primary aluminum production in January 2020 was 92,000 metric tons (t). The average daily production in January 2020 was 2,980 t, essentially unchanged from that in December 2019, slightly less than that in January 2019, but 40% more than that in January 2018 (fig. 1, table 1).

Total aluminum recovered from scrap in January 2020 was 269,000 t, slightly more than the revised amount in December 2019, 8% less than the amount in January 2019, and 12% less than that in January 2018. Of this, 146,000 t of aluminum was recovered from new scrap and 123,000 t was recovered from old scrap (fig. 1, table 1).

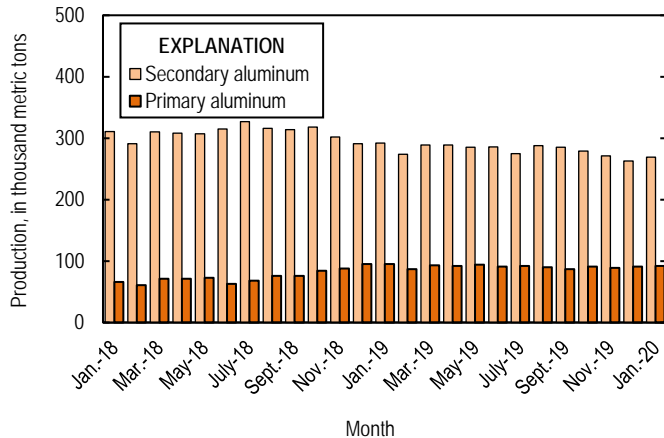


Figure 1. Monthly domestic primary and secondary aluminum production from January 2018 through January 2020.

Prices and Stocks

The January 2020 average U.S. spot market price of primary aluminum ingot was \$0.945 per pound, essentially unchanged from that in December 2019. The average cash price in January 2020 of primary aluminum ingot on the London Metal Exchange (LME) was \$0.804 per pound, essentially unchanged from that in December 2020 (fig. 2, table 6).

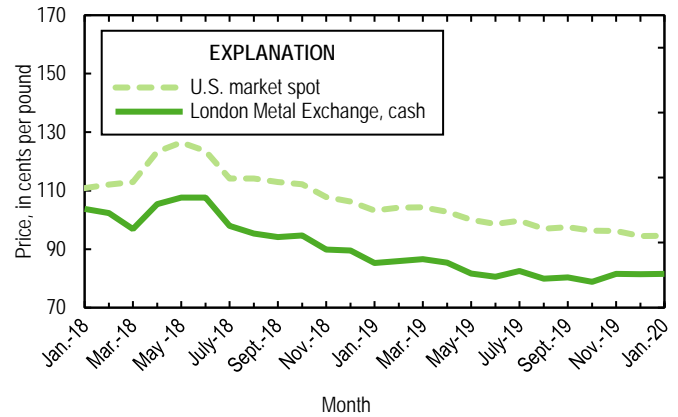


Figure 2. Average monthly prices for primary aluminum from January 2018 through January 2020. Source: Platts Metals Week.

Inventories of primary aluminum in LME-approved warehouses in the United States decreased to 4,200 t at the end of January 2020 from 4,750 t at the end of December 2019. Inventories of secondary aluminum (North American Secondary Aluminum Alloy Contract) in LME-approved warehouses in the United States decreased to 37,620 t at the end of January 2020 from 40,620 t at the end of December 2019 (London Metal Exchange Ltd., 2019, 2020).

Update

The Aluminum Association Inc. filed antidumping and countervailing duty petitions with the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. International Trade Commission on behalf of producers of common alloy aluminum sheet in the United States. The petition alleges that producer in 18 countries sold common alloy aluminum sheet in the United States below market prices. The countries named in the antidumping petition were Bahrain, Brazil, Croatia, Egypt, Germany, Greece, India, Indonesia, Italy, the Republic of Korea, Oman, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Taiwan, and Turkey. The countervailing duty petition alleged that common alloy

aluminum sheet producers in Bahrain, Brazil, India, and Turkey received government subsidy programs. The Aluminum Association alleged that producers in these countries began selling common alloy aluminum sheet using prohibited practices after antidumping and countervailing duties were imposed on producers in China in February 2019 (Lazzaro, 2020a).

On March 18, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles N.V., Ford Motor Co., and General Motors Co. announced that they would stop production until at least March 30 at all their assembly lines in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The United Auto Workers union, which represents many of the employees on the assembly lines asked for a temporary stoppage of work citing concerns about the COVID-19 virus. Honda Motor Co. stopped production at its plants in North America on March 23 for at least 6 days, citing anticipated decreased demand and concerns about COVID-19. Toyota Motor Corp. stopped production from its plants in North America for at least two days starting March 23. Several automobile plants in Europe have also been shut down citing concerns about the virus. On March 25, The Boeing Co. shut down production of aircraft for at least two weeks at its locations near Seattle, WA. Decreased demand for aluminum by automobile makers and concerns about the virus were also cited for shutdowns at secondary aluminum producers, extruders, and rolling mills in Europe and North America. Constellium SE announced that it would shut down production from several rolling mills in Europe and North America for at least two weeks (Boeing Co., The, 2020; Coyne, 2020a, b; Holman, 2020a, b; Latham, 2020; Lazzaro, 2020b).

Primary aluminum production in North America was continuing despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Alcoa Corp. stated that production was continuing at all its facilities which included primary smelters in Evansville, IN, Ferndale, WA, and Massena, NY, as well as in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Iceland, Norway, Saudi Arabia, and Spain. Century Aluminum Co. stated that it did not have plans to decrease production from its smelters in Hawesville, KY, Mount Holly, SC, and Sebree, KY, nor from its smelter in Iceland. The Aluminium Association of Canada Inc. reached an agreement with the government of Quebec, Canada, to allow primary aluminum smelters in the province to continue producing. The government of Quebec had issued an order for all non-essential industries to shut down temporarily because of the virus. Quebec has approximately 2.5 million metric tons per year of primary aluminum capacity owned by Alcoa, Aluminerie Alouette Inc., and Rio Tinto plc. In Argentina, Aluar Ltd. shut down 25% of the capacity at its 460,000-metric-ton-per-year smelter in compliance with a Government mandate in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Because the process to restart primary aluminum smelters takes

several weeks and is expensive, many companies have tried to avoid shutdowns if possible while implementing measures to keep enough distance between employees to minimize the risk of spreading the virus (Alcoa Corp., 2020; Century Aluminum Co., 2020; McBeth, 2020; Ribeiro, 2020).

References Cited

- Alcoa Corp., 2020, COVID-19 update: Pittsburg, PA, Alcoa Corp. press release, March 26. (Accessed March 26, 2020, at <https://www.alcoa.com/global/en/covid19-response/releases.asp?id=2020/03/covid-19-update-2&year=y2020>.)
- Boeing Co., The, 2020, Boeing to temporarily suspend Puget Sound production operations in response to escalating COVID-19 pandemic: Chicago, IL, Boeing Co., The, press release, March 23. (Accessed March 26, 2020, at <https://boeing.mediaroom.com/2020-03-23-Boeing-to-Temporarily-Suspend-Puget-Sound-Production-Operations-in-Response-to-Escalating-COVID-19-Pandemic>.)
- Century Aluminum Co., 2020, Century Aluminum Company announces Hawesville labor contract extension and provides update on COVID-19 response: Chicago, IL, Century Aluminum Co. press release, March 24, 1 p. (Accessed March 26, 2020, at <https://centuryaluminum.gcs-web.com/node/17551/pdf>.)
- Coyne, Justin, 2020a, Big Three US automakers to halt North American production: Platts Metals Daily, v. 9, no. 55, March 18, p. 1, 16.
- Coyne, Justin, 2020b, Honda, Toyota to temporarily suspend North American auto production: Platts Metals Daily, v. 9, no. 55, March 18, p. 16.
- Holman, Jacqueline, 2020a, BMW, Daimler shut European automotive plants to protect employees from coronavirus spread: Platts Metals Daily, v. 9, no. 55, March 18, p. 1, 15–16.
- Holman, Jacqueline, 2020b, European secondary aluminum tanks as OEMs shut down: Platts Metals Daily, v. 9, no. 57, March 20, p. 7–8.
- Latham, Emmanuel, 2020, European Al billet spot activity non-existent as consumers shutdown: Platts Metals Daily, v. 9, no. 57, March 20, p. 5.
- Lazzaro, Nick, 2020a, Aluminum Association files US sheet antidumping duty petitions targeting 18 countries: Platts Metals Daily, v. 9, no. 48, March 9, p. 1–3.
- Lazzaro, Nick, 2020b, Constellium suspends some operations in response to COVID-19: Platts Metals Daily, v. 9, no. 56, March 19, p. 4.
- London Metal Exchange Ltd., 2019, Aluminium stocks: London, United Kingdom, London Metal Exchange Ltd., December 31, 3 p.
- London Metal Exchange Ltd., 20120, Aluminium stocks: London, United Kingdom, London Metal Exchange Ltd., January 31, 3 p.
- McBeth, Karen, 2020, Deal reached to keep Quebec aluminum smelters operating–Association: Platts Metals Daily, v. 9, no. 58, March 23, p. 3–4.
- Ribeiro, Henrique, 2020, Argentina’s Aluar to cut 25% of Al production due to virus–Source: Platts Metals Daily, v. 9, no. 59, March 24, p. 6.

List services and web feed subscribers are the first to receive notification of USGS minerals information publications and data releases. For information on how to subscribe, go to <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic/minerals-information-publication-list-services>.

TABLE 1
COMPONENTS OF ALUMINUM SUPPLY¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Primary production	Secondary recovery ²			Imports for consumption			Total new supply ³	Stocks, end of period ⁴
		New	Old	Total	Metals and alloys, crude	Plates, sheets, bars, etc.	Total		
2019 ^p	1,093	1,870	1,510	3,380 ^r	3,800	1,440	5,240	9,710	1,600
2019:									
January	95	173 ^r	119	292 ^r	299	136	435	821	1,640
February	87	153	121	274	286	118	404	765	1,600
March	93	160 ^r	129	289 ^r	315	145	460	842	1,590
April	92	161	127 ^r	289 ^r	315	143	458	839	1,650
May	94	158	127	285	288	135	423	803	1,630
June	91	159	127	286	316	131	447	824	1,630
July	92	146 ^r	129	275	421	117	538	905	1,640
August	90	158	130	288	334	115	449	828	1,650
September	87	159	125	285 ^r	292	105	397	769	1,640
October	91	151	128	279	319	100	419	789	1,630
November	89	146 ^r	126	271	302	96	398	759	1,600
December	91	144	118	263 ^r	317	96	413	767	1,600
2020, January	92	146	123	269	347	28	375	736	NA

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised. NA Not Available.

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

²Metallic recovery from purchased, tolled, or imported scrap, expanded for full coverage of industry.

³Primary production, secondary recovery, and imports for consumption.

⁴Inventory levels reflect total for U.S. and Canadian producers; data from the Aluminum Association Inc.

TABLE 2
ESTIMATED FULL COVERAGE CONSUMPTION OF AND METALLIC RECOVERY FROM
PURCHASED NEW AND OLD ALUMINUM SCRAP¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Secondary smelters		Independent mill fabricators		Foundries		Other consumers		Total	
	Con-sump-tion	Metal recovery	Con-sump-tion	Metal recovery	Con-sump-tion	Metal recovery	Con-sump-tion	Metal recovery	Con-sump-tion	Metal recovery
	2019 ^p	2,200	1,660	1,770	1,620	101	93	4	4	4,070
2019:										
January	179 ^r	136 ^r	161	148	8	8	(2)	(2)	349 ^r	292 ^r
February	182	138	140	128	8	8	(2)	(2)	331 ^r	274
March	189 ^r	141	152	140	8	8	(2)	(2)	350 ^r	289 ^r
April	184	140 ^r	154	141	8	8	(2)	(2)	346	289 ^r
May	185	140 ^r	150	137	8	8	(2)	(2)	344	285
June	184	139	152	139	8	8	(2)	(2)	345	286
July	182	137	142	130	8	8	(2)	(2)	333	275
August	182	136 ^r	158	145	8	8	(2)	(2)	348	288
September	182	138	151	139	8	8	(2)	(2)	342	285 ^r
October	185	140	143	130	8	8	(2)	(2)	336	279
November	185	139	136	124	8	8	(2)	(2)	329	271
December	179	136	129	118	8	8	(2)	(2)	317	263 ^r
2020, January	180	137	135	124	8	8	(2)	(2)	325	269

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised.

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

²Less than ½ unit.

TABLE 3
 CONSUMPTION OF AND RECOVERY FROM PURCHASED
 NEW AND OLD ALUMINUM SCRAP IN JANUARY 2020¹

(Metric tons)

	Consumption		Calculated metallic recovery	
	Tabulated reports	Estimated full coverage	Tabulated reports	Estimated full coverage
Secondary smelters	150,000	180,000	114,000	137,000
Independent mill fabricators	123,000	135,000	112,000	124,000
Foundries	7,040	8,450	6,440	7,730
Other consumers	273	328	273	328
Total	280,000	325,000	233,000	269,000

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

TABLE 4
PURCHASED AND TOLL-TREATED ALUMINUM-BASE SCRAP IN JANUARY 2020¹

(Metric tons)

	Stocks, opening ²	Net receipts ³	Melted or consumed	Stocks, closing
New scrap:				
Extrusion	20,400	49,000	49,100	20,300
Can stock clippings	5,500	24,800	24,900	5,360
Other wrought sheet/clippings	86,500	92,700	32,000	147,000
Casting	3,370	5,920	5,920	3,370
Borings and turnings	3,760	11,300	11,500	3,530
Dross and skimmings	10,600	38,000	38,000	10,600
Total new scrap	130,000	222,000	161,000	190,000
Old scrap:				
Used castings	6,830	27,000	27,000	6,830
Used extrusion	7,320	16,000	16,000	7,320
Used cans (shredded, loose, baled)	9,630	40,100	39,900	9,860
Other wrought products	15,300	27,700	27,100	15,900
Fragmentized shredder (auto shredder)	4,530	8,780	8,900	4,410
Total old scrap	43,600	120,000	119,000	44,300
Total all classes	174,000	341,000	280,000	235,000

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

²May include revisions to previously published data.

³Includes data on imported aluminum-base scrap.

TABLE 5
ALUMINUM ALLOYS PRODUCED AT SECONDARY SMELTERS IN THE UNITED
STATES IN JANUARY 2020^{1,2}

(Metric tons)

	Stocks, opening ³	Production	Net shipments	Stocks, closing
Die-cast alloys:				
13% Si, 360, etc. (0.6% Cu, max.)	3,220	1,670	1,670	3,220
380 and variations	7,700	15,400	15,400	7,700
Sand and permanent mold:				
95/5 Al-Si, 356, etc. (0.6% Cu, max.)	1,450	2,620	2,620	1,450
No. 319 and variations	4,730	4,190	4,190	4,730
F-132 alloy and variations	182	249	249	182
Al-Zn alloys	467	81	81	467
Al-Si alloys (0.6% to 2.0% Cu)	219	133	133	219
Al-Cu alloys (1.5% Si, max.)	673	161	161	673
Other ⁴	6,970	9,620	9,620	6,970
Wrought alloys, extrusion billets	10,400	54,600	54,600	10,400
Total all alloys	36,000	88,700	88,700	36,000
Less:				
Primary aluminum consumed	XX	15,600	XX	XX
Primary silicon consumed	XX	1,830	XX	XX
Other alloying ingredients consumed	XX	795	XX	XX
Net metallic recovery from aluminum scrap consumed in production of secondary aluminum ingot ⁵				
	XX	70,500	XX	XX

XX Not applicable.

¹Excludes integrated aluminum companies.

²Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

³May include revisions to previously published data.

⁴Includes alloys No. 12, Al-Mg, Al-Zn, Al-Cu, Al-Si-Cu-Ni, aluminum-base hardeners, variations of these all

⁵No allowance made for melt-loss of primary aluminum and alloying ingredients.

TABLE 6
 AVERAGE PRICE OF ALUMINUM IN THE UNITED STATES
 AND ON THE LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

(Cents per pound)

Period	Midwest U.S. market price	LME cash price Grade A
2019:		
January	103.268	83.711
February	104.202	84.333
March	104.286	84.907
April	102.825	83.849
May	100.083	80.510
June	98.625	79.547
July	99.707	81.310
August	96.929	78.950
September	97.507	79.340
October	96.283	77.949
November	96.236	80.375
December	94.488	80.288
January–December	99.537	81.256
2020, January	94.545	80.351

Source: Platts Metals Week.

TABLE 7
AVERAGE BUYING PRICES FOR ALUMINUM SCRAP

(Cents per pound)

Month	Used beverage cans	Mixed low copper clips	Old sheet	Old cast	Turnings (clean and dry)
2019:					
January	54.98	50.55	44.38	43.45	39.38
February	57.58	50.21	45.32	44.32	39.50
March	59.60	51.00	46.00	45.00	39.38
April	59.48	51.38	46.40	45.48	39.05
May	57.00	49.05	44.77	43.07	37.91
June	54.12	47.15	42.40	40.90	34.70
July	54.00	46.34	41.00	39.00	32.18
August	53.18	45.64	39.18	38.43	31.39
September	51.50	42.10	36.98	35.90	29.35
October	51.59	40.11	34.91	34.37	26.67
November	53.24	39.00	33.74	33.24	26.50
December	53.12	39.00	35.48	34.98	27.12
January–December	54.95	45.96	40.88	39.85	33.59
2020, January	53.40	40.10	37.38	37.07	29.62

Source: American Metal Market.

TABLE 8
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ALUMINUM IN JANUARY 2020¹

(Metric tons)

Country or locality	Metals and alloys, crude	Plates, sheets, bars, etc	Scrap	Total
Argentina	26,400	--	--	26,400
Australia	20,000	--	--	20,000
Austria	--	346	--	346
Bahrain	9,380	--	--	9,380
Belgium	2	47	--	49
Brazil	--	490	--	490
Canada	213,000	255	6,190	220,000
Chile	--	--	67	67
China	22	7,940	--	7,960
Colombia	--	--	66	66
Costa Rica	--	--	12	12
El Salvador	--	--	211	211
France	344	13	--	357
Germany	133	2,590	96	2,820
Greece	--	147	--	147
Guatemala	--	--	245	245
Honduras	--	152	23	175
Hong Kong	--	26	--	26
India	20,400	166	--	20,600
Indonesia	--	94	--	94
Italy	145	502	145	792
Japan	--	145	--	145
Korea, Republic of	992	758	124	1,870
Malaysia	203	74	--	277
Mexico	--	822	2,430	3,250
Netherlands	98	30	--	128
New Zealand	3,600	--	--	3,600
Norway	77	--	--	77
Oman	99	6	--	105
Qatar	7,110	--	--	7,110
Romania	--	74	--	74
Russia	9,260	2	--	9,260
Saudi Arabia	2,550	7,470	--	10,000
South Africa	1,510	329	--	1,840
Spain	48	36	--	84
Sweden	--	308	--	308
Switzerland	--	18	--	18
Taiwan	1	70	--	71
Thailand	59	4,550	--	4,610
Turkey	--	130	--	130
United Arab Emirates	31,000	--	--	31,000
United Kingdom	24	746	115	885
Venezuela	25	--	--	25
Vietnam	--	44	--	44
Other	390	61	311	762
Total	347,000	28,400	10,000	386,000

-- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 9
U.S. EXPORTS OF ALUMINUM IN JANUARY 2020¹

(Metric tons)

Country or locality	Metals and alloys, crude	Plates, sheets, bars, etc.	Scrap	Total
Australia	77	212	--	289
Belgium	3	19	387	409
Brazil	--	687	884	1,570
Canada	8,500	30,900	6,950	46,400
China	250	1,430	10,500	12,200
Colombia	--	67	40	107
Dominican Republic	--	9	--	9
France	116	681	212	1,010
Germany	3	620	274	897
Guatemala	2	11	--	13
Hong Kong	1	42	5,740	5,780
India	1	129	28,900	29,000
Indonesia	--	17	5,680	5,700
Ireland	--	32	--	32
Israel	1	987	--	988
Italy	--	136	600	736
Jamaica	--	2	--	2
Japan	52	1,300	1,560	2,910
Korea, Republic of	405	1,930	22,300	24,700
Malaysia	758	218	26,500	27,500
Mexico	5,910	26,100	17,200	49,200
Netherlands	5	28	172	205
New Zealand	--	28	--	28
Norway	--	--	--	--
Pakistan	39	4	773	816
Panama	--	12	--	12
Philippines	21	41	736	798
Poland	--	19	--	19
Romania	11	247	--	258
Russia	--	7	1,610	1,620
Saudi Arabia	1	107	20	128
Singapore	13	125	2,090	2,230
Spain	--	46	278	324
Taiwan	216	382	3,550	4,150
Thailand	--	81	5,040	5,130
Turkey	--	396	150	546
United Arab Emirates	4	43	892	939
United Kingdom	115	686	333	1,130
Vietnam	47	23	1,020	1,090
Other	8	405	1,450	1,860
Total	16,600	68,200	146,000	231,000

-- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.