

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SULFUR IN JANUARY 2020

During January 2020, production of recovered elemental sulfur was 729,000 metric tons (t), which was 3% lower than that of December 2019 and the same as that of January 2019. Shipments were 742,000 t, which was slightly lower than those of December 2019. Producers' ending stocks for January 2020 were 111,000 t (table 1).

Imports of recovered sulfur for January 2020 were estimated at 128,000 t; exports were 97,000 t. Imports of sulfuric acid for January 2020 were 306,000 t; exports were 16,000 t (tables 2–4).

U.S. sulfur consumption, calculated as shipments minus exports plus imports, was 773,000 t in January 2020. This was 8% higher than that of December 2019 and 35% higher than that of January 2019 (table 5).

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TABLE 1
SALIENT SULFUR STATISTICS¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Production			Shipments, all sources	Stocks, end of period ³
	Petroleum ²	Natural gas	Total		
2019:					
January	699	29	729	744	101
February	592	26	618	611	109
March	650	28	678	664	120
April	625	27	652	666	107
May	621	21	642	640	107
June	624	28	652	647	113
July	690	30	720	725	107
August	677	25	703	699	111
September	620 ^r	25	644 ^r	641	114 ^r
October	611	28	639	643 ^r	109 ^r
November	658 ^r	27	685	676	119 ^r
December	721	29	749	744	124
January–December	7,790 ^r	322	8,110	8,100	124
2020, January ^p	701	28	729	742	111

^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		Total, all countries ²	
	Quantity	Value ³	Quantity	Value ³
2019:				
January	129	10,100	179	19,800
February	106	6,400	156	16,000
March	144	8,240	191	15,400
April	137	7,370	182	14,200
May	119	6,180	120	7,060
June	108	4,980	207	16,200
July	126	6,730	132	13,000
August	109	4,000	152	9,380
September	97	3,490	99	4,480
October	124	3,360	178	14,500
November	119	2,790	121	3,870
December	127	2,230	129	3,270
January–December	1,450	65,900	1,850	137,000
2020, January ^p	126 ^e	2,970	128 ^e	4,190

^eEstimated.

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 as adjusted by U.S. Geological Survey and Acuity Commodities.

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
2019:									
January	139	45	7,280	36	12	1,470	237	77	14,200
February	118	39	6,380	43	14	1,890	185	60	12,000
March	183	60	9,220	63	21	4,490	350	114	24,200
April	157	51	16,300	65	21	4,320	250	82	24,700
May	175	57	19,100	23	8	2,310	233	76	25,700
June	151	49	15,600	24	8	1,810	237	77	23,300
July	178	58	14,200	34	11	2,140	251	82	21,700
August	190	62	13,300	29	9	1,800	262	86	20,500
September	156	51	11,000	38	12	2,290	198	65	15,200
October	185	60	14,400	37	12	1,990	320	105	24,300
November	109	36	8,110	34	11	1,900	166	54	13,200
December	180	59	13,600	59	19	3,320	281	92	21,200
January–December	1,920	628	149,000	485	159	29,700	2,970	971	240,000
2020, January	150	49	11,200	58	19	4,670	306	100	23,400

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
2019:					
January	349	29,800	16	5	2,980
February	119	15,800	18	6	2,990
March	144	14,700	13	4	2,610
April	116	14,000	21	7	4,240
May	210	21,900	21	7	2,910
June	150	13,600	18	6	1,920
July	120	12,400	15	5	2,890
August	296	13,100	17	6	2,630
September	152	11,100	18	6	2,520
October	320	8,690	28	9	2,310
November	53	4,750	11	4	1,530
December	157	11,200	25	8	1,650
January–December	2,190	171,000	220	72	31,200
2020, January	97	4,720	16	5	2,650

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	Consumption
2019:			
January	395 ^r	179	574 ^r
February	492	156	648
March	520	191	711
April	550	182	732
May	430	120	550
June	497	207	704
July	605	132	737
August	403	152	555
September	489	99	588
October	323 ^r	178	501 ^r
November	623	121	744
December	587	129	716
January–December	5,910 ^r	1,850	7,760
2020, January ^p	645	128	773

^rRevised. ^pPreliminary.

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 2019 ²		December 2019		January 2020 ^p	
	Production	Shipments	Production	Shipments	Production	Shipments
PAD 1:						
Petroleum and coke	18	19	19	19	21	21
Natural gas	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	19	20	20	20	22	22
PAD 2:						
Petroleum and coke	119	118	128	129	128	128
Natural gas	1	--	--	--	--	--
Total	119	118	128	129	128	128
PAD 3:						
Petroleum and coke	439	447	429	432	425	432
Natural gas	10	11	10	10	9	9
Total	449	458	439	441	434	442
PAD 4 and 5:						
Petroleum and coke	124	130	144	136	128	133
Natural gas	17	18	17	18	17	17
Total	142	148	162	154	145	150
Grand total	729	744	749	744	729	742

^pPreliminary. -- Zero.

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

²May include revisions to previously published data.

TABLE 7
COMPARATIVE SULFUR AND SULFURIC ACID STATISTICS¹

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

	2019		2020
	December	Total	January
Production	8.82	8.11	8.61 ^P
Shipments	8.76	8.10	8.76 ^P
Exports of sulfur	1.85	2.19	1.15
Imports of sulfur:			
Canada	1.50	1.45	1.49
Total ²	1.52	1.85	1.51
Exports of H ₂ SO ₄	0.29	0.22	0.19
Imports of H ₂ SO ₄ :			
Canada	2.12	1.92	1.77
Mexico	0.69	0.49	0.68
Total ²	3.31	2.97	3.61
Consumption:			
Domestic sources	6.91	5.91 ^r	7.62
Imports	1.52	1.85	1.51
Total	8.43	7.76	9.13
Sulfur export values ³	71	78	49
Sulfur import values: ³			
Canada	18	45	24
Average ³	25	74	33
H ₂ SO ₄ export values ³	66	142	166
H ₂ SO ₄ import values: ³			
Canada	76	78 ^r	75
Mexico	56	61	81
Average ²	75	81	76

^PPreliminary. ^rRevised.

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.