

# Mineral Industry Surveys

## For information, contact:

Amy C. Tolcin, Zinc Commodity Specialist (Acting)  
 National Minerals Information Center  
 U.S. Geological Survey  
 989 National Center  
 Reston, VA 20192  
 Telephone: (703) 648-4940 Fax: (703) 648-7757  
 Email: atolcin@usgs.gov

Hodan A. Fatah (Data)  
 Telephone: (703) 648-4971  
 Fax: (703) 648-7975  
 Email: hfatah@usgs.gov

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

## ZINC IN JANUARY 2020

Domestic mine production (recoverable) of zinc in January 2020 was 56,000 metric tons (t) (tables 1, 2). Average daily mine production in January was 1,810 t, slightly lower than that in the previous month and 16% lower than that in January 2019 (fig. 1).

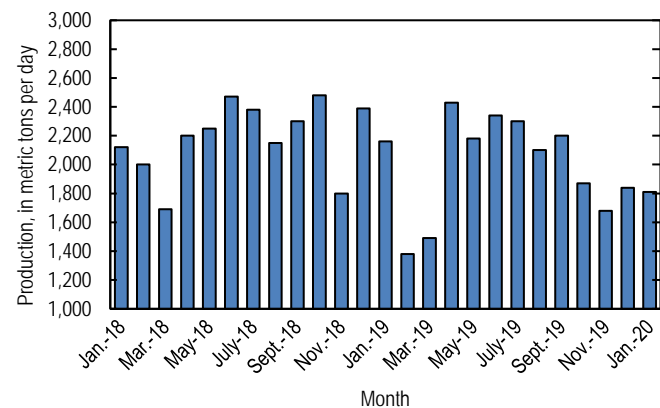


Figure 1. Average daily domestic zinc mine production (recoverable) from January 2018 through January 2020.

### Stocks and Prices

Global London Metal Exchange Ltd. (LME) stocks of Special High Grade (SHG) zinc were 49,775 t at the end of January 2020, slightly lower than stocks at the end of December and 56% lower than stocks at the end of January 2019 (fig. 2, table 8).

The monthly average Platts Metals Week North American SHG zinc price in January 2020 was \$1.15 per pound, 3% higher than that in the previous month but 7% lower than that in January 2019. The January 2020 average LME cash price for SHG zinc was \$2,356.60 per metric ton (\$1.07 per pound), 4% higher than that in December but 8% lower than that in January 2019 (fig. 3, table 7).

The North American premium to the LME cash price in January 2020 averaged 8.5 cents per pound, essentially

unchanged from that in the previous month and slightly less than in January 2019 (fig. 3, table 7).

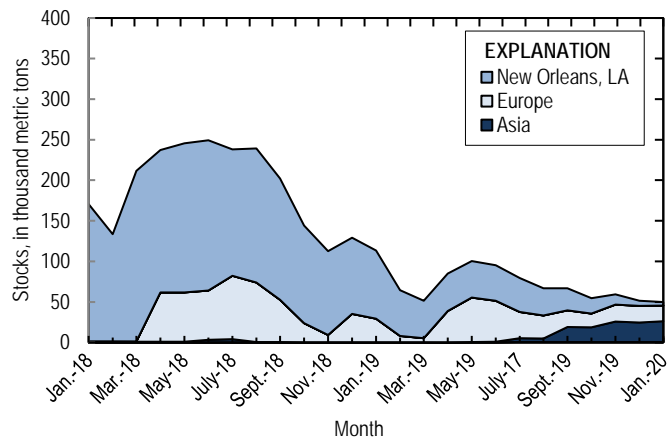


Figure 2. Global LME stocks of Special High Grade zinc, monthend, from January 2018 through January 2020. Source: London Metal Exchange Ltd.

### Update

Teck Resources Ltd. (Canada) reported that the Red Dog zinc-lead mine in Alaska maintained normal production levels during the first quarter of 2020. Hecla Mining Co. (Coeur d'Alene, ID) announced that its U.S. mining operations, including the Greens Creek and Lucky Friday zinc-producing mines, were all considered essential businesses and were fully operational during the first quarter of 2020. However, both companies withdrew their initial production guidance for 2020 amid market uncertainty related to COVID-19 (Hecla Mining Co., 2020; Teck Resources Ltd., 2020, p. 4, 20).

### References Cited

Hecla Mining Co., 2020, Hecla updates COVID-19 actions and first quarter production: Coeur d'Alene, ID, Hecla Mining Co. press release, April 7. (Accessed April 22, 2020, at <http://ir.hecla-mining.com/file/Index?KeyFile=403537919>.)

Teck Resources Ltd., 2020, Teck reports unaudited first quarter results for 2020: Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, Teck Resources Ltd. news release, April 20, 76 p. (Accessed April 22, 2020, at <https://www.teck.com/media/Q1-2020-NR-Quarterly.pdf>.)

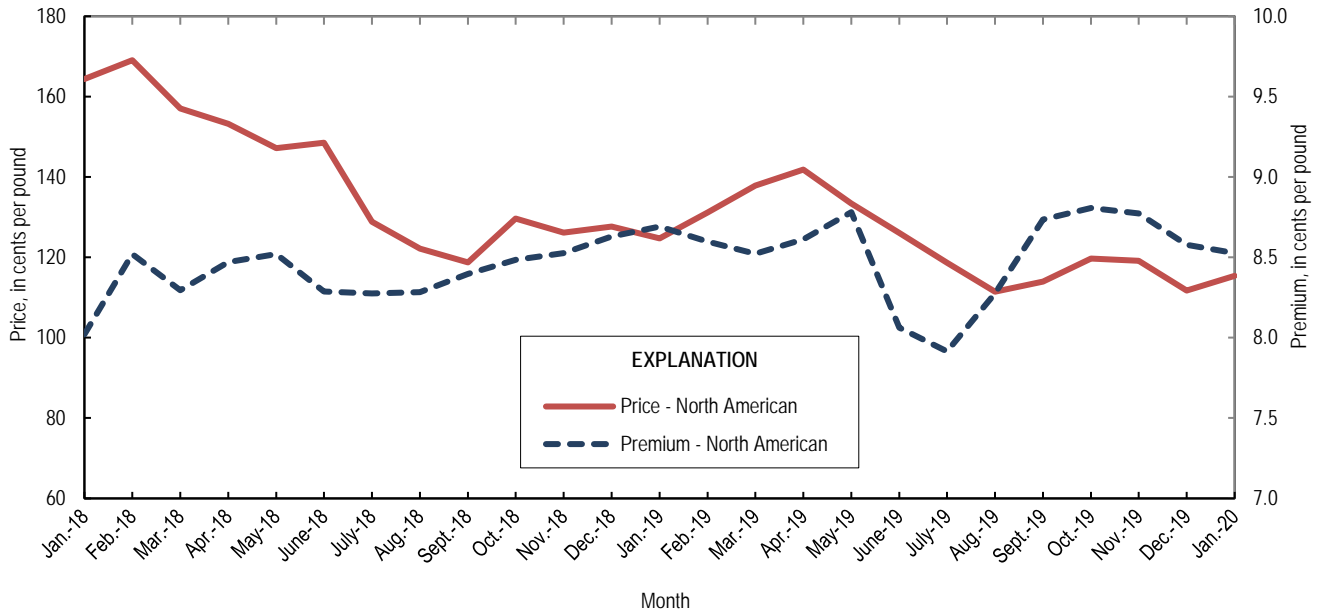


Figure 3. Average monthly North American price and premium for Special High Grade zinc from January 2018 through January 2020. Source: Platts Metals Week.

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  
SALIENT ZINC STATISTICS<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons, unless otherwise specified)

	2019		2020 January
	January– December <sup>p</sup>	December	
<b>Production:</b>			
Mine, zinc content of concentrate <sup>2</sup>	752,000	58,900	57,700
Mine, recoverable zinc <sup>2</sup>	730,000	57,200	56,000
Smelter, refined zinc <sup>c</sup>	115,000	9,900	9,900
Consumption of refined zinc, apparent <sup>3</sup>	939,000	88,000	79,000
<b>Imports for consumption:</b>			
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	10	--	--
Refined zinc	830,000	78,300	69,500
<b>Exports:</b>			
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	869,000	19,100	3,510
Refined zinc	5,170	272	487
<b>Price:<sup>4</sup></b>			
London Metal Exchange cash, average, dollars per metric ton	2,548.63	2,273.40	2,356.60
Platts Metals Week North American, average, cents per pound	124.13	111.70	115.42

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. <sup>p</sup>Preliminary. -- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>Reported zinc content in both zinc and lead concentrates.

<sup>3</sup>Smelter production plus imports for consumption minus domestic exports.

<sup>4</sup>Special High Grade Zinc.

TABLE 2  
MINE AND SMELTER PRODUCTION OF ZINC  
IN THE UNITED STATES<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons)

Period	Mine <sup>2</sup>		Smelter <sup>e</sup>
	Zinc content	Recoverable	
2019:			
January	68,900	66,900	8,600
February	39,800	38,600	8,600
March	47,600	46,100	8,600
April	75,300	73,000	9,900
May	69,500	67,500	9,900
June	71,800	70,300	9,900
July	73,500	71,400	9,900
August	67,100	65,100	9,900
September	68,100	66,100	9,900
October	59,600	57,800	9,900
November	51,700	50,300	9,900
December	58,900	57,200	9,900
January–December	752,000	730,000	115,000
2020, January	57,700	56,000	9,900

<sup>e</sup>Estimated.

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

<sup>2</sup>Includes the zinc content in both lead and zinc concentrates.

TABLE 3  
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ZINC<sup>1</sup>

(Gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material	2019		2020 January	
	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	10	\$7	--	--
Unwrought:				
Refined zinc	830,000	2,190,000	69,500	\$170,000
Zinc alloys	1,530	4,480	94	264
Wrought:				
Bars, rods, profiles, wire	3,020	10,600	347	1,120
Plates, sheets, strip, foil	3,010	12,700	131	541
Ash and residues:				
Hard zinc spelter	20	17	--	--
Zinc dross and skimmings	3,750	5,980	388	591
Other (zinc content)	1,320	784	--	--
Other:				
Powders, flakes, dust	25,500	94,900	2,000	7,060
Waste and scrap	10,400	18,200	757	1,460
Chemicals:				
Lithopone	1,170	4,240	49	201
Zinc oxide	99,300	272,000	9,980	25,700
Zinc chloride	196	1,450	45	225
Zinc sulfate	71,700	64,300	6,660	5,090
Zinc sulfide	956	3,590	146	636

-- Zero.

<sup>1</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4  
U.S. IMPORTS OF ZINC, BY TYPE OF MATERIAL AND COUNTRY OR LOCALITY<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons, gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material and country or locality	General imports		Imports for consumption	
	2020		2020	
	2019	January	2019	January
<b>Ore and concentrate (zinc content):</b>				
Canada	10	--	10	--
Total	10	--	10	--
<b>Refined zinc:</b>				
Belgium	--	--	393	--
Brazil	11,300	3,000	11,300	3,000
Canada	517,000	44,500	517,000	44,500
China	49	6	5,770	6
Korea, Republic of	8,110	--	8,340	--
Mexico	142,000	16,300	142,000	16,300
Netherlands	--	--	3,420	--
Peru	59,300	5,720	59,300	5,720
Poland	268	--	268	--
Spain	14,500	--	81,900	49
Taiwan	62	--	62	--
Other	6	--	6	--
Total	753,000	69,500	830,000	69,500
<b>Oxide:</b>				
Australia	394	64	394	64
Belgium	30	--	30	--
Canada	44,100	4,410	44,100	4,410
China	187	3	187	3
El Salvador	20	--	20	--
France	18	--	18	--
Germany	1,300	97	1,300	97
Greece	300	160	300	160
Hong Kong	5	--	5	--
India	74	--	74	--
Indonesia	103	--	103	--
Israel	--	10	--	10
Italy	42	--	42	--
Japan	927	76	927	76
Korea, Republic of	96	19	96	19
Mexico	39,000	4,170	39,000	4,170
Netherlands	9,270	680	9,270	680
Peru	2,990	269	2,990	269
Russia	20	--	20	--
United Kingdom	425	15	425	15
Other	6	--	6	--
Total	99,300	9,980	99,300	9,980

-- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5  
U.S. EXPORTS OF ZINC<sup>1</sup>

(Gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material	2019		2020 January	
	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	869,000	\$1,400,000	3,510	\$2,990
Unwrought:				
Refined zinc	5,170	14,300	487	1,290
Zinc alloys	21,600	63,500	1,810	5,010
Wrought:				
Bars, rods, profiles, wire	10,200	30,300	756	2,490
Plates, sheets, strip, foil	6,190	24,500	536	2,110
Ash and residues:				
Hard zinc spelter	9,370	16,700	655	938
Other (zinc content)	25,000	38,600	2,020	2,720
Other:				
Powders, flakes, dust	13,400	48,500	1,250	4,140
Waste and scrap	30,800	40,100	2,510	3,000
Chemicals:				
Lithopone	170	905	29	177
Zinc oxide	15,200	30,900	826	2,150
Zinc chloride	185	316	69	256
Zinc sulfate	486	648	24	23
Zinc sulfide	2,070	17,300	238	1,070

<sup>1</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 6  
U.S. EXPORTS OF ZINC, BY TYPE OF MATERIAL AND COUNTRY OR LOCALITY<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons, gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material and country or locality	2019	2020
		January
Ore and concentrate (zinc content):		
Australia	64,100	--
Belgium	107,000	--
Brazil	7,030	--
Canada	268,000	3,510
Finland	29,400	--
Germany	29,200	--
Italy	33,800	--
Japan	90,200	--
Korea, Republic of	70,100	--
Mexico	31,200	--
Peru	5,000	--
Spain	116,000	--
Switzerland	17,500	--
Other	83	--
Total	869,000	3,510
Refined zinc:		
Australia	46	--
Canada	928	86
China	502	--
Colombia	98	--
Guatemala	17	10
India	132	201
Indonesia	375	--
Malaysia	625	--
Mexico	1,800	189
Panama	39	--
South Africa	438	--
Vietnam	40	--
Other	135	(2)
Total	5,170	487
Oxide:		
Australia	127	--
Belgium	90	1
Brazil	455	56
Canada	4,860	420
China	457	23
Germany	131	10
Guyana	124	--
India	825	30
Mexico	7,140	192
Poland	177	--
Thailand	123	--
United Kingdom	127	41
Other	520	55
Total	15,200	826

-- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.



TABLE 7  
AVERAGE PRICES FOR SPECIAL HIGH GRADE ZINC

Period	North American		London Metal Exchange	
	Premium	Price <sup>1</sup>	cash <sup>2</sup>	
	¢/lb.	¢/lb.	¢/lb.	\$/t
2019:				
January	8.7	124.74	116.05	2,558.49
February	8.6	131.17	122.58	2,702.34
March	8.5	137.84	129.32	2,850.91
April	8.6	141.88	133.26	2,937.96
May	8.8	133.37	124.59	2,746.79
June	8.1	126.07	118.01	2,601.56
July	7.9	118.64	110.72	2,440.96
August	8.3	111.45	103.17	2,274.60
September	8.7	113.93	105.20	2,319.16
October	8.8	119.71	110.90	2,444.99
November	8.8	119.11	110.33	2,432.43
December	8.6	111.70	103.12	2,273.40
January–December	8.5	124.13	115.60	2,548.63
2020, January	8.5	115.42	106.89	2,356.60

<sup>1</sup>Platts Metals Week North American price. Based on the London Metal Exchange cash price plus the North American premium.

<sup>2</sup>Average of the cash buyer price and the cash seller and settlement price.

Source: Platts Metals Week.

TABLE 8  
LONDON METAL EXCHANGE (LME) STOCKS OF SPECIAL HIGH GRADE ZINC, END OF PERIOD

(Metric tons)

Period	United States			Asia	Europe	Other	Total LME
	Chicago, IL	New Orleans, LA	Total				
2019:							
January	25	84,000	84,025	--	29,150	25	113,200
February	--	56,625	56,625	--	7,900	25	64,550
March	--	45,900	45,900	--	5,350	25	51,275
April	--	46,475	46,475	--	38,575	--	85,050
May	--	44,900	44,900	325	54,900	250	100,375
June	--	43,825	43,825	600	50,500	200	95,125
July	--	41,925	41,925	4,475	32,325	625	79,350
August	--	33,875	33,875	4,150	28,375	575	66,975
September	--	27,175	27,175	18,275	20,725	575	66,750
October	--	18,850	18,850	17,975	17,100	575	54,500
November	--	12,475	12,475	25,175	20,975	575	59,200
December	--	6,125	6,125	24,350	20,350	375	51,200
2020, January	--	4,150	4,150	25,950	19,300	375	49,775

-- Zero.

Source: London Metal Exchange, Ltd.