

Mineral Industry Surveys

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ZINC IN FEBRUARY 2020

Domestic mine production (recoverable) of zinc in February 2020 was 56,000 metric tons (t) (tables 1, 2). Average daily mine production in February was 1,930 t, 7% more than that in the previous month and 40% more than that in February 2019 (fig. 1).

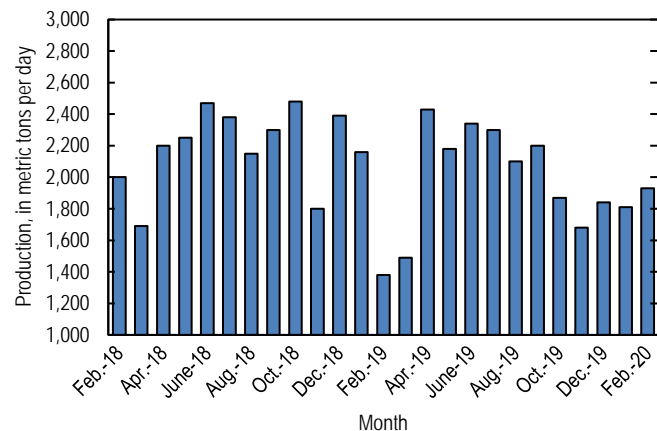


Figure 1. Average daily domestic zinc mine production (recoverable) from February 2018 through February 2020.

Stocks and Prices

Global London Metal Exchange Ltd. (LME) stocks of Special High Grade (SHG) zinc were 75,200 t at the end of February 2020, 51% more than stocks at the end of January and 16% more than stocks at the end of February 2019 (fig. 2, table 8).

The monthly average Platts Metals Week North American SHG zinc price in February 2020 was \$1.05 per pound, 9% lower than that in the previous month and 20% lower than that in February 2019. The February 2020 average LME cash price for SHG zinc was \$2,119.90 per metric ton (\$0.96 per pound), 10% lower than that in January and 22% lower than that in February 2019 (fig. 3, table 7).

The North American premium to the LME cash price in February 2020 averaged 8.5 cents per pound, essentially unchanged from that in the previous month and from that in February 2019 (fig. 3, table 7).

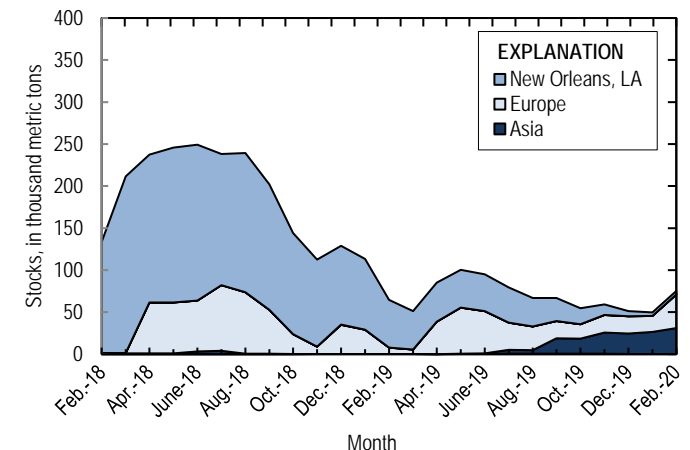


Figure 2. Global LME stocks of Special High Grade zinc, monthend, from February 2018 through February 2020. Source: London Metal Exchange Ltd.

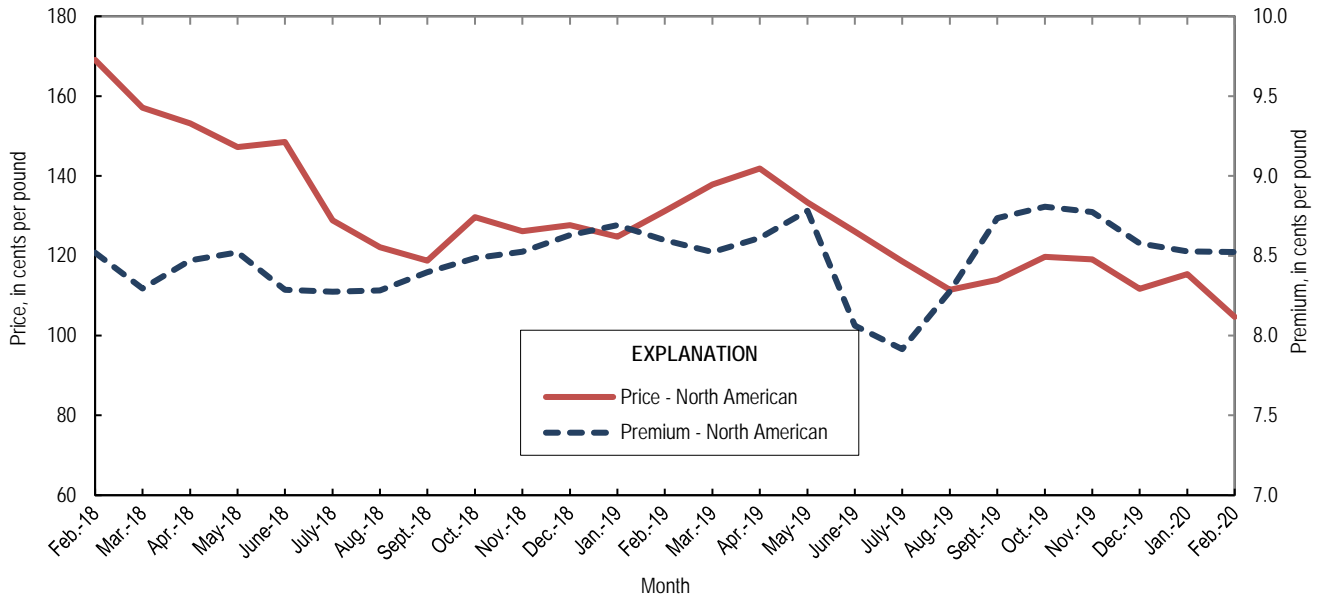


Figure 3. Average monthly North American price and premium for Special High Grade zinc from February 2018 through February 2020. Source: Platts Metals Week.

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TABLE 1
SALIENT ZINC STATISTICS¹

(Metric tons, unless otherwise specified)

	2019	2020		
	January– December ^p	January	February	January– February ²
Production:				
Mine, zinc content of concentrate ³	752,000	57,700	56,500	114,000
Mine, recoverable zinc ³	730,000	56,000	56,000	112,000
Smelter, refined zinc ^c	115,000	9,900	9,900	19,800
Consumption of refined zinc, apparent ⁴	939,000	79,000	60,600	140,000
Imports for consumption:				
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	10	--	--	--
Refined zinc	830,000	69,500	50,900	120,000
Exports:				
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	869,000	3,510	11,700	15,200
Refined zinc	5,170	487	153	640
Price:⁵				
London Metal Exchange cash, average, dollars per metric ton	2,548.63	2,356.60	2,119.90	2,238.25
Platts Metals Week North American, average, cents per pound	124.13	115.42	104.69	110.06

^cEstimated. ^pPreliminary. -- Zero.

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

²May include revisions to previously published data.

³Reported zinc content in both zinc and lead concentrates.

⁴Smelter production plus imports for consumption minus domestic exports.

⁵Special High Grade Zinc.

TABLE 2
MINE AND SMELTER PRODUCTION OF ZINC
IN THE UNITED STATES¹

(Metric tons)

Period	Mine ²		Smelter ^e
	Zinc content	Recoverable	
2019:			
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
February	56,500	56,000	9,900
January–February	114,000	112,000	19,800

^eEstimated.

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
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ZINC¹

(Gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material	2019		2020			
	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	February		January–February ²	
			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	50,900	\$118,000	120,000	\$287,000
Zinc alloys	1,530	4,480	73	180	167	444
Wrought:						
Bars, rods, profiles, wire	3,020	10,600	268	860	615	1,980
Plates, sheets, strip, foil	3,010	12,700	149	569	280	1,110
Ash and residues:						
Hard zinc smelter	20	17	--	--	--	--
Zinc dross and skimmings	3,750	5,980	535	759	923	1,350
Other (zinc content)	1,320	784	129	100	129	100
Other:						
Powders, flakes, dust	25,500	94,900	1,650	5,660	3,650	12,700
Waste and scrap	10,400	18,200	617	1,010	1,370	2,470
Chemicals:						
Lithopone	1,170	4,240	70	286	119	488
Zinc oxide	99,300	272,000	10,000	26,700	20,000	52,400
Zinc chloride	196	1,450	21	99	66	324
Zinc sulfate	71,700	64,300	8,510	6,310	15,200	11,400
Zinc sulfide	956	3,590	115	646	262	1,280

-- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

²May include revisions to previously published data.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. IMPORTS OF ZINC, BY TYPE OF MATERIAL AND COUNTRY OR LOCALITY¹

(Metric tons, gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material and country or locality	General imports			Imports for consumption		
	2019	2020		2019	2020	
		February	January–February ²		February	January–February ²
Ore and concentrate (zinc content), Canada	10	--	--	10	--	--
Refined zinc:						
Belgium	--	--	--	393	--	--
Brazil	11,300	1,790	4,800	11,300	1,790	4,800
Canada	517,000	36,800	81,300	517,000	36,800	81,300
China	49	--	6	5,770	--	6
Korea, Republic of	8,110	500	500	8,340	500	500
Mexico	142,000	6,290	22,600	142,000	6,290	22,600
Netherlands	--	--	--	3,420	--	--
Peru	59,300	5,410	11,100	59,300	5,410	11,100
Poland	268	--	--	268	--	--
Spain	14,500	--	--	81,900	49	98
Taiwan	62	--	--	62	--	--
Other	6	--	--	6	--	--
Total	753,000	50,800	120,000	830,000	50,900	120,000
Oxide:						
Australia	394	79	143	394	79	143
Belgium	30	--	--	30	--	--
Canada	44,100	4,540	8,960	44,100	4,540	8,960
China	187	--	3	187	--	3
El Salvador	20	--	--	20	--	--
France	18	1	1	18	1	1
Germany	1,300	75	172	1,300	75	172
Greece	300	--	160	300	--	160
India	74	--	--	74	--	--
Indonesia	103	--	--	103	--	--
Israel	--	--	10	--	--	10
Italy	42	--	--	42	--	--
Japan	927	73	150	927	73	150
Korea, Republic of	96	22	41	96	22	41
Mexico	39,000	4,520	8,690	39,000	4,520	8,690
Netherlands	9,270	538	1,220	9,270	538	1,220
Peru	2,990	198	468	2,990	198	468
Russia	20	--	--	20	--	--
United Kingdom	425	--	15	425	--	15
Other	11	2	2	11	2	2
Total	99,300	10,000	20,000	99,300	10,000	20,000

-- Zero.

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

²May include revisions to previously published data.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
U.S. EXPORTS OF ZINC¹

(Gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material	2019		2020			
	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	February		January–February ²	
			Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	869,000	\$1,400,000	11,700	\$18,000	15,200	\$21,000
Unwrought:						
Refined zinc	5,170	14,300	153	496	640	1,780
Zinc alloys	21,600	63,500	1,500	4,130	3,310	9,130
Wrought:						
Bars, rods, profiles, wire	10,200	30,300	754	2,430	1,510	4,920
Plates, sheets, strip, foil	6,190	24,500	396	1,560	932	3,670
Ash and residues:						
Hard zinc spelter	9,370	16,700	827	1,160	1,480	2,090
Other (zinc content)	25,000	38,600	1,420	1,810	3,450	4,540
Other:						
Powders, flakes, dust	13,400	48,500	635	2,470	1,890	6,600
Waste and scrap	30,800	40,100	2,230	2,660	4,740	5,660
Chemicals:						
Lithopone	170	905	32	154	61	330
Zinc oxide	15,200	30,900	941	2,230	1,770	4,380
Zinc chloride	185	316	21	30	89	286
Zinc sulfate	486	648	17	36	41	59
Zinc sulfide	2,070	17,300	91	799	329	1,870

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

²May include revisions to previously published data.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 6
U.S. EXPORTS OF ZINC, BY TYPE OF MATERIAL AND COUNTRY OR LOCALITY¹

(Metric tons, gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material and country or locality	2019	2020	
		February	January-February ²
Ore and concentrate (zinc content):			
Australia	64,100	--	--
Belgium	107,000	--	--
Brazil	7,030	--	--
Canada	268,000	4,060	7,570
Finland	29,400	--	--
Germany	29,200	--	--
Italy	33,800	--	--
Japan	90,200	2,030	2,030
Korea, Republic of	70,100	5,430	5,430
Mexico	31,200	--	--
Peru	5,000	120	120
Spain	116,000	--	--
Switzerland	17,500	--	--
Other	83	5	5
Total	869,000	11,700	15,200
Refined zinc:			
Australia	46	7	7
Canada	928	52	138
China	502	--	--
Colombia	98	--	--
Guatemala	17	--	10
India	132	--	201
Indonesia	375	--	--
Malaysia	625	--	--
Mexico	1,800	74	264
Panama	39	--	--
South Africa	438	--	--
Vietnam	40	20	20
Other	135	(3)	(3)
Total	5,170	153	640
Oxide:			
Australia	127	100	100
Belgium	90	2	2
Brazil	455	51	107
Canada	4,860	361	781
China	457	27	50
Germany	131	74	84
Guyana	124	--	--
India	825	8	38
Mexico	7,140	159	351
Poland	177	16	16
Thailand	123	1	1
United Kingdom	127	60	101
Other	520	83	137
Total	15,200	942	1,770

-- Zero.

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

²May include revisions to previously published data.

³Less 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 ¹	cash ²	
	¢/lb.	¢/lb.	¢/lb.	\$/t
2019:				
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
February	8.5	104.68	96.16	2,119.90
January–February	8.5	110.05	101.53	2,238.25

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

²Average 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
	New Orleans, LA	Total				
2019:						
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
February	4,100	4,100	30,750	40,000	350	75,200

-- Zero.

Source: London Metal Exchange, Ltd.