

Mineral Industry Surveys

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ALUMINUM IN APRIL 2020

Domestic primary aluminum production in April 2020 was 92,000 metric tons (t). The average daily production in April 2020 was 3,060 t, essentially unchanged from that in March 2020 and April 2019, but 30% more than that in April 2018 (fig. 1, table 1).

Total aluminum recovered from scrap in April 2020 was 246,000 t, 12% less than the amount in March 2020, 15% less than the amount in April 2019, and 20% less than that in April 2018. Of this, 128,000 t of aluminum was recovered from new scrap and 118,000 t was recovered from old scrap (fig. 1, table 1).

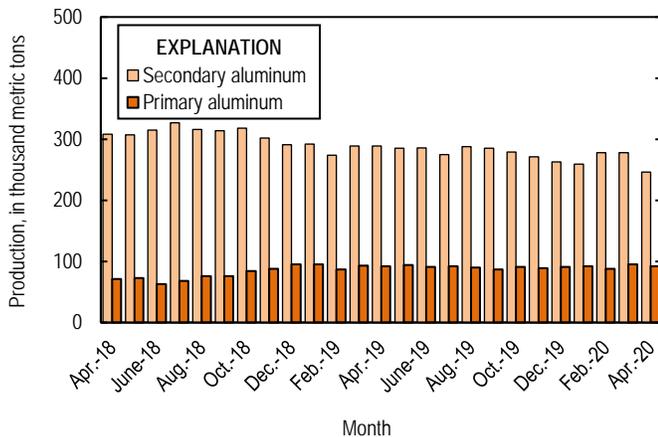


Figure 1. Monthly domestic primary and secondary aluminum production from April 2018 through April 2020.

Prices and Stocks

The April 2020 average U.S. spot market price of primary aluminum ingot was \$0.765 per pound, 12% less than that in March 2020, 26% less than that in April 2019, and 38% less than that in April 2018. The average cash price in March 2020 of primary aluminum ingot on the London Metal Exchange (LME) was \$0.661 per pound, 10% less than that in March 2020, 21% less than that in April 2019, and 35% less than that in April 2018 (fig. 2, table 6).

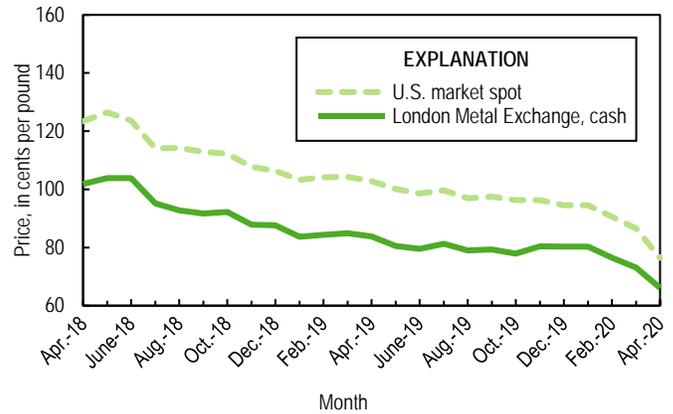


Figure 2. Average monthly prices for primary aluminum from April 2018 through April 2020. Source: Platts Metals Week.

Inventories of primary aluminum in LME-approved warehouses in the United States decreased to 2,675 t at the end of April from 3,200 t at the end of March. Inventories of secondary aluminum (North American Secondary Aluminum Alloy Contract) in LME-approved warehouses in the United States decreased to 34,240 t at the end of April from 35,040 t at the end of March (London Metal Exchange Ltd., 2020a, b).

U.S. Trade

Total imports for consumption of aluminum in the first four months of 2020 (table 8) were 10% less than those in the same period in 2019; imports of crude metal and alloys increased by 4%, but imports of semifabricated products and scrap decreased by 36% and 18%, respectively. Canada continued to be the leading source of imported aluminum materials, supplying 56% of all aluminum imports during the first four months of 2020, followed by the United Arab Emirates (8%). Canada accounted for 65% of crude metal, 20% of semifabricated products, and 64% of scrap imports. China accounted for 10% of semifabricated product imports. Mexico was the source of 28% of scrap imports.

Total exports of aluminum (table 9) decreased by 11% during the first four months of 2020 compared with those of the same period in the previous year. Exports of crude metal and alloys, semifabricated aluminum products, and scrap decreased by 21%, 17%, and 7%, respectively, compared with those in the same period of 2019. The leading destinations for total aluminum products during the first four months of 2020, in descending order of quantity, were Mexico (20%), Canada (18%), India (12%), and the Republic of Korea (12%). Mexico and Canada were the leading destination for exports of crude metal and alloys, receiving 47% and 43%, respectively. Canada and Mexico were the leading destinations for exports of semifabricated aluminum products, receiving 42% and 37%, respectively. The leading destinations for scrap were India, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, China, and Mexico, receiving 18%, 17%, 17%, 11%, and 9%, respectively.

Update

On June 29, Keymark Corp. shut down production from its plant in Fonda, NY, citing an outbreak of cases of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The plant has approximately 500 employees, 74 of which tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. The plant produces anodized and painted aluminum extrusions and has a cast house that produces extrusion billet from primary aluminum and scrap. The production capacity of the plant was not available. A restart schedule was not announced (Roh, 2020).

The U.S. Department of Commerce announced a preliminary determination that subsidies were provided to certain producers and exporters of aluminum foil made in China. The investigation was initiated in June 2019 and reviewed aluminum foil imports between August 14, 2017 and December 31, 2018. The investigation determined that countervailable subsidies were provided to eight aluminum foil producers at rates ranging from 17.04% to 48.26% (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2020).

The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Asset Control imposed sanctions on four companies based in Iran that produce or export aluminum, iron, and steel. Funding of terrorist activities by the Government of Iran was cited for the sanctions. South Aluminum Co., which completed a 300,000-metric-ton-per-year smelter in April, was named in the sanctions. (See Aluminum in March 2020). All assets in the United States of the companies named must be blocked and citizens of the United States are generally prohibited from all dealings with these companies (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2020).

References Cited

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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	3,800	1,440	5,240	9,710	1,600
2019:									
April	92	161	127	289	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	129	275	421	117	538	905	1,640
August	90	158	130	288	334	115	449	828	1,650
September	87	159	125	285	292	105	397	769	1,640
October	91	151	128	279	319	100	419	789	1,630
November	89	146	126	271	302	96	398	759	1,600
December	91	144	118	263	317	96	413	767	1,600
January–April	366	648	496	1,140	1,210	542	1,750	3,260	1,600
2020:									
January	92	147	123	269	347	98 ^r	445 ^r	806 ^r	1,650
February	88	157	122	278	261 ^r	83 ^r	344 ^r	710 ^r	1,580
March	95	154	124	278	308 ^r	89 ^r	397 ^r	770 ^r	1,590
April	92	128	117	246	338	75	413	751	1,590
January–April	366	585	486	1,070	1,250	345	1,600	3,040	1,590

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised.

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 ^r	1,660	1,770 ^r	1,620	101	93	4	4	4,070
2019:										
April	184	140	154	141	8	8	(2)	(2)	346	289
May	185	140	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	158	145	8	8	(2)	(2)	348	288
September	182	138	151	139	8	8	(2)	(2)	342	285
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
January–April	734	555	606	557	34	31	1	1	1,380	1,140
2020:										
January	180	137	135	124	8	8	(2)	(2)	325	269
February	180	136	145	134	8	8	(2)	(2)	334	278
March	182	137	147	135	6	5	(2)	(2)	336	278
April	173	132	119	108	6	5	(2)	(2)	298	246
January–April	716	543	547	501	29	26	1	1	1,290	1,070

^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 APRIL 2020¹

(Metric tons)

	Consumption		Calculated metallic recovery	
	Tabulated reports	Estimated full coverage	Tabulated reports	Estimated full coverage
Secondary smelters	145,000	173,000	110,000	132,000
Independent mill fabricators	106,000	119,000	96,700	108,000
Foundries	4,950	5,940	4,530	5,440
Other consumers	273	328	273	328
Total	256,000	298,000	212,000	246,000

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 APRIL 2020¹

(Metric tons)

	April				January–April ²	
	Stocks, opening ²	Net receipts ³	Melted or consumed	Stocks, closing	Net receipts ³	Melted or consumed
New scrap:						
Extrusion	20,200	34,400	34,300	20,300	190,000	190,000
Can stock clippings	5,460	25,700	25,700	5,530	100,000	100,000
Other wrought sheet/clippings	7,380	30,600	29,700	8,280	128,000	134,000
Casting	3,370	5,260	5,260	3,370	22,200	22,200
Borings and turnings	3,570	10,900	10,900	3,610	45,400	45,600
Dross and skimmings	10,600	35,900	35,900	10,600	152,000	152,000
Total new scrap	50,600	143,000	142,000	51,700	638,000	644,000
Old scrap:						
Used castings	6,830	24,600	24,600	6,830	103,000	103,000
Used extrusion	7,320	16,000	16,000	7,320	63,900	63,900
Used cans (shredded, loose, baled)	9,090	41,200	41,200	9,100	157,000	157,000
Other wrought products	6,470	23,100	24,000	5,550	102,000	112,000
Fragmentized shredder (auto shredder)	4,190	8,790	8,670	4,310	35,700	36,000
Total old scrap	33,900	114,000	114,000	33,100	462,000	472,000
Total all classes	84,500	256,000	256,000	84,800	1,100,000	1,120,000

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 APRIL 2020^{1,2}

(Metric tons)

	April				January–April ³	
	Stocks, opening ³	Production	Net shipments	Stocks, closing	Production	Net shipments
Die-cast alloys:						
13% Si, 360, etc. (0.6% Cu, max.)	3,220	1,300	1,300	3,220	6,310	6,310
380 and variations	7,700	12,300	12,300	7,700	58,400	58,400
Sand and permanent mold:						
95/5 Al-Si, 356, etc. (0.6% Cu, max.)	1,450	2,100	2,100	1,450	9,960	9,960
No. 319 and variations	4,730	3,300	3,300	4,730	15,900	15,900
F-132 alloy and variations	182	200	200	182	947	947
Al-Zn alloys	467	65	65	467	309	309
Al-Si alloys (0.6% to 2.0% Cu)	219	105	105	219	504	504
Al-Cu alloys (1.5% Si, max.)	673	130	130	673	613	613
Other ⁴	6,970	7,700	7,700	6,970	36,600	36,600
Wrought alloys, extrusion billets	10,400	43,700	43,700	10,400	208,000	208,000
Total all alloys	36,000	70,900	70,900	36,000	337,000	337,000
Less:						
Primary aluminum consumed	XX	12,000	XX	XX	58,700	XX
Primary silicon consumed	XX	1,500	XX	XX	7,000	XX
Other alloying ingredients consumed	XX	600	XX	XX	2,990	XX
Net metallic recovery from aluminum scrap consumed in production of secondary aluminum ingot ⁵						
	XX	56,800	XX	XX	268,000	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 alloys, plus other aluminum alloys.

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:		
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
February	90.540	76.451
March	86.591	73.070
April	76.450	66.095
January–April	87.032	73.992

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:					
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
February	51.66	42.16	39.29	39.24	33.82
March	50.02	41.80	38.95	39.95	35.18
April	40.79	37.12	32.45	34.17	29.25
January–April	48.97	40.30	37.02	37.61	31.97

Source: American Metal Market.

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

(Metric tons)

Country or locality	Metals and alloys, crude		Plates, sheets, bars, etc		Scrap		Total	
	April	January– April	April	January– April	April	January– April	April	January– April
Argentina	18,700	61,200	--	--	--	--	18,700	61,200
Australia	11,300	53,100	23	99	--	--	11,400	53,200
Austria	--	--	525	2,120	--	--	525	2,120
Bahrain	5,940	27,000	4,080	14,500	--	--	10,000	41,500
Belgium	16	63	200	1,610	--	--	216	1,670
Brazil	--	--	1,040	5,720	95	107	1,130	5,830
Canada	220,000	813,000	7,970	69,500	17,000	106,000	245,000	989,000
Chile	--	--	--	--	571	802	571	802
China	39	275	9,370	36,000	4	7	9,410	36,200
Colombia	--	--	--	--	--	302	--	302
Costa Rica	--	--	--	--	67	437	67	437
France	353	1,310	1,810	5,140	9	656	2,170	7,110
Germany	22	82	5,090	23,700	120	516	5,230	24,300
Greece	--	--	1,160	5,820	1	16	1,160	5,830
Guatemala	--	--	--	--	117	1,210	117	1,210
Honduras	--	--	418	1,530	--	44	418	1,580
Hong Kong	--	--	93	177	--	--	93	177
Iceland	--	343	--	--	--	--	--	343
India	23,000	51,800	3,040	11,000	--	343	26,100	63,200
Indonesia	--	--	1,700	7,300	--	--	1,700	7,300
Italy	--	--	1,780	5,360	264	545	2,040	5,910
Japan	--	--	737	4,770	59	499	796	5,270
Korea, Republic of	404	5,220	2,790	12,000	206	1,650	3,400	18,900
Malaysia	19	222	480	1,960	24	24	523	2,200
Mexico	2	2	1,990	8,530	13,800	46,500	15,700	55,000
Netherlands	101	527	451	1,520	87	398	639	2,440
New Zealand	484	6,300	1	3	--	--	485	6,310
Norway	--	155	243	929	--	--	243	1,080
Oman	--	99	6,500	20,800	--	--	6,500	20,900
Qatar	6,310	26,000	--	--	--	--	6,310	26,000
Romania	--	--	371	2,360	--	36	371	2,400
Russia	11,700	51,900	264	1,650	--	--	12,000	53,500
Saudi Arabia	341	5,450	4,610	25,600	--	--	4,950	31,100
South Africa	611	4,450	1,250	8,000	--	--	1,860	12,400
Spain	79	357	893	6,490	--	92	972	6,940
Sweden	--	--	405	1,710	--	--	405	1,710
Switzerland	--	--	295	1,220	--	--	295	1,220
Taiwan	--	67	2,640	8,060	48	229	2,690	8,350
Thailand	138	387	3,660	14,600	58	192	3,850	15,200
Turkey	--	--	4,300	13,500	--	--	4,300	13,500
United Arab Emirates	38,400	144,000	38	372	--	--	38,400	144,000
United Kingdom	2	53	309	1,710	408	1,250	719	3,010
Venezuela	--	25	--	--	--	--	--	25
Vietnam	--	--	2,140	8,060	--	--	2,140	8,060
Other	--	96	1,900	11,800	490	3,610	2,390	15,500
Total	338,000	1,250,000	74,500	345,000	33,400	166,000	446,000	1,760,000

-- 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 APRIL 2020¹

(Metric tons)

Country or locality	Metals and alloys, crude		Plates, sheets, bars, etc.		Scrap		Total	
	April	January– April	April	January– April	April	January– April	April	January– April
Australia	39	123	117	707	--	--	156	830
Belgium	--	16	15	111	900	2,340	915	2,470
Brazil	1	9	254	1,480	100	1,220	255	2,710
Canada	4,410	28,600	17,100	108,000	2,980	24,400	24,500	161,000
China	330	1,000	2,080	7,850	26,600	66,500	29,000	75,400
Colombia	--	6	173	384	--	109	173	499
Dominican Republic	--	1	68	144	--	59	68	204
France	37	258	725	3,160	75	560	837	3,980
Germany	2	91	627	2,240	417	1,640	1,050	3,970
Guatemala	--	2	2	24	--	--	2	26
Hong Kong	1	4	34	196	7,020	22,400	7,050	22,600
India	5	80	147	521	10,400	106,000	10,600	107,000
Indonesia	--	8	5	31	5,620	29,300	5,620	29,300
Ireland	--	--	51	269	--	--	51	269
Israel	3	7	1,490	5,530	--	--	1,490	5,540
Italy	17	54	99	562	1,100	2,780	1,220	3,400
Jamaica	--	49	--	14	4	4	4	67
Japan	231	678	1,660	6,260	1,180	5,640	3,080	12,600
Korea, Republic of	79	541	2,210	8,580	24,100	97,600	26,400	107,000
Malaysia	130	1,720	219	761	23,800	97,200	24,200	99,700
Mexico	4,140	30,700	18,500	95,600	3,700	53,000	26,400	179,000
Netherlands	4	15	23	145	38	572	65	732
New Zealand	--	--	6	103	--	--	6	103
Norway	--	1	--	4	--	--	--	5
Pakistan	--	39	--	5	723	3,540	723	3,590
Panama	--	--	--	23	--	--	--	23
Philippines	--	237	20	106	544	2,750	564	3,090
Poland	--	1	39	105	--	37	39	143
Romania	--	43	361	1,530	--	--	361	1,580
Russia	--	--	1	19	2,910	9,520	2,910	9,540
Saudi Arabia	--	2	88	307	--	182	88	491
Singapore	15	66	186	819	56	2,430	257	3,320
Spain	--	--	73	216	500	2,010	573	2,230
Taiwan	396	1,030	439	1,820	3,060	13,000	3,900	15,900
Thailand	--	1	67	385	5,670	21,900	5,740	22,300
Turkey	--	24	303	1,900	316	1,440	619	3,360
United Arab Emirates	--	4	44	157	788	2,950	832	3,110
United Kingdom	10	186	563	2,830	--	996	573	4,010
Vietnam	119	165	278	780	1,040	3,280	1,440	4,220
Other	11	73	295	1,570	718	6,360	1,020	8,000
Total	9,980	65,900	48,400	255,000	124,000	582,000	183,000	903,000

-- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.