

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 MAY 2020

Domestic primary aluminum production in May 2020 was 96,000 metric tons (t). The average daily production in May 2020 was 3,090 t, essentially unchanged from that in April 2020, slightly more than that in May 2019, but 31% more than that in May 2018 (fig. 1, table 1).

Total aluminum recovered from scrap in May 2020 was 231,000 t, 6% less than the amount in April 2020, 19% less than the amount in May 2019, and 25% less than that in May 2018. Of this, 122,000 t of aluminum was recovered from new scrap and 109,000 t was recovered from old scrap (fig. 1, table 1).

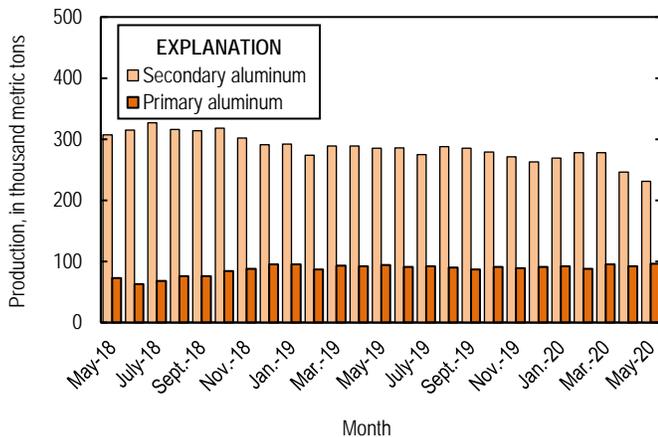


Figure 1. Monthly domestic primary and secondary aluminum production from May 2018 through May 2020.

Prices and Stocks

The May 2020 average U.S. spot market price of primary aluminum ingot was \$0.75 per pound, slightly less than that in April 2020, 25% less than that in May 2019, and 41% less than that in May 2018. The average cash price in May 2020 of primary aluminum ingot on the London Metal Exchange (LME) was \$0.662 per pound, essentially unchanged from that in April 2020, 18% less than that in May 2019, and 36% less than that in May 2018 (fig. 2, table 6).

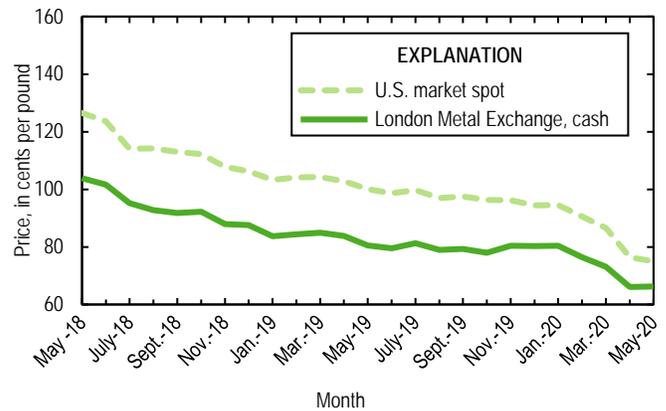


Figure 2. Average monthly prices for primary aluminum from May 2018 through May 2020. Source: Platts Metals Week.

Inventories of primary aluminum in LME-approved warehouses, including off-warrant inventories, in the United States increased to 132,870 t at the end of May from 98,304 t at the end of April. Inventories of secondary aluminum (North American Secondary Aluminum Alloy Contract) in LME-approved warehouses, including off-warrant inventories, in the United States decreased to 39,477 t at the end of May from 40,840 t at the end of April (London Metal Exchange Ltd., 2020a-d).

Update

Imports of used beverage can (UBC) scrap in May increased by 37% compared with imports in April and by 45% compared with those in May 2019 as lockdown measures in response to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) affected collection efforts. At least nine of the ten States which collect deposits on beverage containers adjusted rules on redemption centers to be consistent with lockdown orders. Starting in mid-March, these States generally closed redemption centers and encouraged consumers to return containers once the lockdown ends. As a result, supplies of UBC scrap decreased while demand for can

sheet and beverages in aluminum cans remained firm (Container Recycling Institute, 2020; Stewart, 2020).

References Cited

Container Recycling Institute, 2020. COVID-19 impact on deposit redemption—U.S. & Canada: Culver City, CA, Container Recycling Institute press release, July 17. (Accessed July 17, 2020, at <http://www.bottlebill.org/index.php/covid-19-bottle-redemption-update>.)

London Metal Exchange Ltd., 2020a, Aluminium stocks: London, United Kingdom, London Metal Exchange Ltd., April 30, 3 p.

London Metal Exchange Ltd., 2020b, Aluminium stocks: London, United Kingdom, London Metal Exchange Ltd., May 29, 3 p.

London Metal Exchange Ltd., 2020c, Off-warrant stock reporting—April 2020: London, United Kingdom, London Metal Exchange Ltd., May 11, 1 p.

London Metal Exchange Ltd., 2020d, Off-warrant stock reporting—May 2020: London, United Kingdom, London Metal Exchange Ltd., June 10, 1 p.

Stewart, Jenny, 2020, UBC imports climb in May on weak supply: Fastmarkets-AMM, v. 128, no. 29–2, July 14, p. 9.

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	3,800	1,440	5,230 ^r	9,700 ^r	1,600
2019:									
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–May	461	807	623	1,430	1,500	677	2,170	4,060	1,600
2020:									
January	92	147	123	269	347	98	445	806	1,650
February	88	157	122	278	261	83	344	710	1,580
March	95	154	124	278	308	89	397	770	1,590
April	92	128	117	246	338	75	413	751	1,590
May	96	122	109	231	316	68	384	710	NA
January–May	462	707	595	1,300	1,570	413	1,980	3,750	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:										
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–May	920	695	756	694	42	39	2	2	1,720	1,430
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
May	165	127	108	98	6	5	(2)	(2)	279	231
January–May	882	670	655	599	35	32	2	2	1,570	1,300

^PPreliminary.

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 MAY 2020¹

(Metric tons)

	Consumption		Calculated metallic recovery	
	Tabulated reports	Estimated full coverage	Tabulated reports	Estimated full coverage
Secondary smelters	138,000	165,000	106,000	127,000
Independent mill fabricators	96,700	108,000	87,800	97,900
Foundries	4,950	5,940	4,530	5,440
Other consumers	273	328	273	328
Total	240,000	279,000	199,000	231,000

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 MAY 2020¹

(Metric tons)

	May				January–May ²	
	Stocks, opening ²	Net receipts ³	Melted or consumed	Stocks, closing	Net receipts ³	Melted or consumed
New scrap:						
Extrusion	20,300	31,800	31,900	20,200	222,000	222,000
Can stock clippings	4,590	22,600	22,900	4,320	123,000	123,000
Other wrought sheet/clippings	8,280	29,700	27,400	10,600	158,000	161,000
Casting	3,370	5,370	5,370	3,370	27,600	27,600
Borings and turnings	4,550	13,700	13,500	4,810	59,200	59,100
Dross and skimmings	10,600	32,500	32,500	10,600	185,000	185,000
Total new scrap	51,700	136,000	134,000	54,000	774,000	778,000
Old scrap:						
Used castings	6,830	23,500	23,500	6,830	126,000	126,000
Used extrusion	7,320	16,000	16,000	7,320	79,800	79,800
Used cans (shredded, loose, baled)	9,100	37,300	37,300	9,110	194,000	194,000
Other wrought products	5,550	22,400	20,800	7,190	125,000	133,000
Fragmentized shredder (auto shredder)	4,310	9,160	8,730	4,740	44,900	44,700
Total old scrap	33,100	108,000	106,000	35,200	570,000	578,000
Total all classes	84,800	244,000	240,000	89,200	1,340,000	1,360,000

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 MAY 2020^{1,2}

(Metric tons)

	May				January–May 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	7,610	7,610
380 and variations	7,700	12,300	12,300	7,700	70,700	70,700
Sand and permanent mold:						
95/5 Al-Si, 356, etc. (0.6% Cu, max.)	1,450	2,100	2,100	1,450	12,100	12,100
No. 319 and variations	4,730	3,300	3,300	4,730	19,200	19,200
F-132 alloy and variations	182	200	200	182	1,150	1,150
Al-Zn alloys	467	65	65	467	374	374
Al-Si alloys (0.6% to 2.0% Cu)	219	105	105	219	609	609
Al-Cu alloys (1.5% Si, max.)	673	130	130	673	743	743
Other ⁴	6,750	7,700	7,700	6,750	44,300	44,300
Wrought alloys, extrusion billets	10,400	43,700	43,700	10,400	251,000	251,000
Total all alloys	35,800	70,900	70,900	35,800	408,000	408,000
Less:						
Primary aluminum consumed	XX	12,000	XX	XX	70,700	XX
Primary silicon consumed	XX	1,500	XX	XX	8,500	XX
Other alloying ingredients consumed	XX	600	XX	XX	3,590	XX
Net metallic recovery from aluminum scrap consumed in production of secondary aluminum ingot ⁵						
	XX	56,800	XX	XX	325,000	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:		
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
May	74.961	66.215
January–May	84.617	72.436

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:					
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
May	39.80	36.80	32.35	33.80	29.25
January–May	47.13	39.60	36.08	36.85	31.42

Source: American Metal Market.

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

(Metric tons)

Country or locality	Metals and alloys, crude		Plates, sheets, bars, etc		Scrap		Total	
	May	January–	May	January–	May	January–	May	January–
		May		May		May		May
Argentina	18,400	79,600	--	--	--	--	18,400	79,600
Australia	4,170	57,200	53	152	--	--	4,230	57,400
Austria	--	--	431	2,550	--	--	431	2,550
Bahrain	11,300	38,300	2,030	16,500	--	--	13,300	54,800
Belgium	--	63	105	1,710	--	--	105	1,780
Brazil	--	--	1,480	7,200	709	816	2,190	8,020
Canada	230,000	1,040,000	8,870	78,400	19,800	126,000	259,000	1,250,000
Chile	--	--	--	--	88	890	88	890
China	193	468	6,960	42,900	4	11	7,160	43,400
Colombia	--	--	408	1,870	83	385	491	2,260
Costa Rica	--	--	1	1	197	634	198	635
France	271	1,580	769	5,910	8	665	1,050	8,160
Germany	18	100	3,370	27,100	61	576	3,450	27,700
Greece	--	--	1,120	6,940	--	16	1,120	6,960
Guatemala	--	--	--	--	779	1,990	779	1,990
Honduras	--	--	479	2,010	--	44	479	2,060
Hong Kong	--	--	17	195	--	--	17	195
Iceland	--	343	--	--	--	--	--	343
India	4,380	56,200	3,450	14,500	--	343	7,840	71,000
Indonesia	--	--	3,030	10,300	--	--	3,030	10,300
Italy	--	--	1,230	6,590	112	657	1,350	7,250
Japan	--	--	898	5,670	18	517	916	6,180
Korea, Republic of	424	5,640	3,050	15,100	156	1,800	3,630	22,500
Malaysia	--	222	113	2,070	--	24	113	2,320
Mexico	--	2	1,670	10,200	14,900	61,300	16,500	71,500
Netherlands	103	629	427	1,940	129	526	659	3,100
New Zealand	69	6,370	--	3	--	--	69	6,380
Norway	--	155	1	930	--	--	1	1,090
Oman	--	99	3,750	24,600	--	--	3,750	24,700
Qatar	6,730	32,700	--	--	--	--	6,730	32,700
Romania	--	--	259	2,620	--	36	259	2,660
Russia	12,900	64,800	64	1,720	20	20	13,000	66,500
Saudi Arabia	--	5,450	5,720	31,300	--	--	5,720	36,800
South Africa	--	4,450	1,180	9,180	--	--	1,180	13,600
Spain	186	544	1,440	7,930	68	160	1,690	8,630
Sweden	--	--	528	2,240	7	7	535	2,240
Switzerland	--	--	161	1,380	--	--	161	1,380
Taiwan	95	162	3,380	11,400	--	229	3,480	11,800
Thailand	35	422	2,100	16,700	19	211	2,160	17,300
Turkey	--	--	6,140	19,600	--	--	6,140	19,600
United Arab Emirates	27,200	171,000	58	431	35	35	27,300	171,000
United Kingdom	6	59	116	1,830	115	1,360	237	3,250
Venezuela	--	25	--	--	--	--	--	25
Vietnam	--	--	1,900	9,950	--	5	1,900	9,950
Other	--	96	1,710	12,100	1,180	4,780	2,890	16,900
Total	316,000	1,570,000	68,500	414,000	38,400	204,000	423,000	2,190,000

-- 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 MAY 2020¹

(Metric tons)

Country or locality	Metals and alloys, crude		Plates, sheets, bars, etc.		Scrap		Total	
	May	January– May	May	January– May	May	January– May	May	January– May
Australia	107	230	248	955	--	--	355	1,190
Belgium	5	21	20	131	1,360	3,710	1,390	3,860
Brazil	9	17	149	1,630	--	1,220	158	2,870
Canada	4,960	33,600	15,100	123,000	4,450	28,900	24,500	185,000
China	5	1,010	1,860	9,720	28,400	94,900	30,300	106,000
Colombia	--	6	32	416	20	129	52	551
Dominican Republic	6	7	17	160	--	59	23	226
France	21	279	546	3,710	57	617	624	4,600
Germany	1	93	510	2,750	492	2,130	1,000	4,980
Guatemala	--	2	3	27	--	--	3	29
Hong Kong	--	4	123	320	7,090	29,500	7,210	29,900
India	--	80	66	587	4,190	111,000	4,260	111,000
Indonesia	--	8	21	52	4,510	33,800	4,530	33,800
Ireland	--	--	47	316	--	--	47	316
Israel	3	10	1,520	7,050	--	--	1,520	7,060
Italy	36	90	138	700	901	3,680	1,080	4,470
Jamaica	14	64	18	32	--	4	32	100
Japan	178	856	1,150	7,410	640	6,280	1,970	14,500
Korea, Republic of	--	541	1,620	10,200	22,300	120,000	23,900	131,000
Malaysia	268	1,990	241	1,000	29,800	127,000	30,300	130,000
Mexico	3,110	33,800	13,800	109,000	1,450	54,500	18,400	198,000
Netherlands	6	21	38	183	102	674	146	878
New Zealand	--	--	43	146	19	19	62	165
Norway	--	1	--	4	--	--	--	5
Pakistan	--	39	--	5	615	4,160	615	4,200
Panama	8	8	--	23	--	--	8	31
Philippines	--	237	24	130	339	3,090	363	3,460
Poland	--	1	43	148	--	37	43	186
Romania	--	43	185	1,720	--	--	185	1,760
Russia	--	--	--	19	645	10,200	645	10,200
Saudi Arabia	--	2	42	349	--	182	42	533
Singapore	--	66	529	1,350	18	2,450	547	3,860
Spain	--	--	53	270	402	2,410	455	2,680
Taiwan	276	1,310	406	2,230	3,530	16,600	4,220	20,100
Thailand	--	1	49	434	5,050	26,900	5,100	27,400
Turkey	5	29	279	2,180	209	1,650	493	3,850
United Arab Emirates	--	4	92	249	578	3,530	670	3,780
United Kingdom	30	216	545	3,370	20	1,020	595	4,600
Vietnam	--	165	9	789	1,020	4,300	1,030	5,260
Other	6	79	311	1,880	4,080	10,400	4,400	12,400
Total	9,060	74,900	39,900	295,000	122,000	705,000	171,000	1,070,000

-- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.