

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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## SODA ASH IN APRIL 2021

In April, soda ash production was 922,000 metric tons (t), a 5% decrease compared with the previous month's production but 18% more than that of April 2020. Ending stocks in April increased for the first time since November 2020 to 276,000 t, 20% more than those of the preceding month (tables 1, 4).

Wyoming trona production in April 2021 was 1.15 million metric tons (Mt), 20% less than the production of March 2021 and 12% less than that of April 2020 (table 1).

Exports of soda ash decreased in April 2021 to 463,000 t, 36% less than those of March 2021 but 12% more than those of April 2020 (table 2).

April 2021 imports of soda ash were 686 t, 25% more than those of March 2021 and about double the amount of April 2020. Soda ash import tonnages can differ significantly from month to month, but generally are much smaller than soda ash export tonnages (tables 3, 4).

Apparent consumption for April 2021 was 412,000 t, 34% more than the total for March 2021 and 14% more than the total for April 2020. Apparent consumption can change significantly

from month to month mostly owing to variation in the quantity of exports but usually stabilizes over the course of the year. (table 4).

Table 5 provides reported soda ash consumption statistics for the first quarter of 2021. Reported consumption for the first quarter was 1.14 Mt, a slight decrease compared with consumption for the first quarter of 2019 but slightly more than that of the first quarter of 2020. During the first quarter of 2021, 555,000 t (49%) went to glassmaking and 318,000 t (28%) was consumed in the production of chemicals.

All percentages in this report were calculated using unrounded data.

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TABLE 1  
SALIENT SODA ASH STATISTICS<sup>1</sup>

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Soda ash		Wyoming trona production
	Production <sup>2</sup>	Stocks, end of period	
2020:			
January–April	3,690 <sup>r</sup>	333	5,840 <sup>r</sup>
April	784	333	1,300
May	679	383	1,060
June	611	519	935
July	717	276	712
August	846	342	1,010
September	747	232	1,150
October	937	293	1,460
November	838	307	1,370
December	927	305	1,450
January–December	9,990	305	15,000
2021:			
January	952	301	1,510
February	1,100	287	1,240
March	969	229	1,440
April	922	276	1,150
January–April	3,940	276	5,340

<sup>r</sup>Revised.

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

<sup>2</sup>Production data include soda ash equivalent from soda liquors only. Soda ash equivalent from mine water is not included. Soda liquors are withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

TABLE 2  
U.S. EXPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY, IN 2021<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April			January–April		
				Quantity	Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)
Argentina	60	18,400	9,520	--	--	--	27,900	1	\$5,950
Australia	35,000	--	29,500	21,000	\$6,350	\$303	85,500	4	20,300
Brazil	88,900	60,000	87,100	6,900	1,310	190	243,000	11	34,500
Canada	14,600	14,900	16,700	16,500	4,120	250	62,700	3	15,400
Chile	40,600	32,800	46,500	7,100	1,770	249	127,000	6	28,900
Colombia	7,000	10,100	28,000	--	--	--	45,100	2	8,930
Guatemala	7,000	--	10,600	--	--	--	17,600	1	3,940
India	15,000	42	40,200	--	--	--	55,300	2	10,200
Indonesia	35,000	38,500	24,800	91,900	17,500	190	190,000	9	35,500
Japan	--	30,500	225	29,700	5,530	186	60,500	3	11,200
Korea, Republic of	168	25,600	16,700	19,800	2,920	148	62,300	3	9,800
Malaysia	30,000	36,200	95,300	39,500	8,940	226	201,000	9	34,300
Mexico	111,000	109,000	184,000	110,000	38,800	352	514,000	23	140,000
Peru	10,200	--	11,600	3	22	6,600	21,700	1	4,340
Saudi Arabia	47,100	99	13,700	--	--	--	60,900	3	9,990
Taiwan	--	13,000	18,900	22,200	3,630	164	54,100	2	9,120
Thailand	64,800	10,600	23,500	26,400	4,420	168	125,000	6	21,000
United Arab Emirates	29,400	--	10,500	--	--	--	39,900	2	6,610
Vietnam	26,800	59,500	21,100	62,400	11,000	176	170,000	8	28,800
Other	12,300	1,450	30,600	9,810	1,940	198	54,200	2	10,600
Total	575,000	460,000	719,000	463,000	108,000	234	2,220,000	100	450,000

-- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>Free alongside ship values at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3  
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY, IN 2021<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	Quantity	April		January–April		
					Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)
China	93	46	121	64	\$42	\$607	323	14	\$210
France	60	103	100	99	89	807	361	16	355
Mexico	116	194	233	233	92	377	777	35	296
United Kingdom	93	201	35	229	138	453	558	25	366
Other	2	107	59	61	92	1,390	229	10	289
Total	363	651	548	686	454	575	2,250	100	1,520

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

<sup>2</sup>Cost, insurance, and freight values at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4  
U.S. APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons)

Period	Production	Exports	Imports	Net stock		Apparent consumption <sup>2</sup>
				Increase	Decrease	
2020:						
January–December	9,990,000	5,590,000	98,100 <sup>e</sup>	15,900	--	4,480,000 <sup>e</sup>
January–April	3,690,000 <sup>r</sup>	2,220,000	37,800	43,300	--	1,470,000 <sup>r</sup>
April	784,000	414,000	336	6,580	--	363,000
May	679,000	425,000	666	50,500	--	204,000
June	611,000	298,000	27,800 <sup>e</sup>	136,000	--	205,000 <sup>e</sup>
July	717,000	386,000	421	--	243,000	574,000
August	846,000	363,000	687	66,300	--	418,000
September	747,000	471,000	28,900 <sup>e</sup>	--	110,000	415,000 <sup>e</sup>
October	937,000	487,000	465	60,700	--	390,000
November	838,000	442,000	556	14,600	--	382,000
December	927,000	500,000	808	--	2,160	429,000
2021:						
January–April	3,940,000	2,220,000	2,250	--	29,400	1,750,000
January	952,000	575,000	363	--	4,370	381,000
February	1,100,000	460,000	651	--	13,400	651,000
March	969,000	719,000	548	--	58,300	309,000
April	922,000	463,000	686	46,700	--	412,000

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. <sup>r</sup>Revised. -- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>Production plus imports minus exports plus or minus stock changes.

TABLE 5  
 REPORTED CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH IN THE UNITED STATES, BY END USE, BY QUARTER<sup>1</sup>

(Thousand metric tons)

NAICS <sup>2</sup> code	End use	2020				2021	
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter– 4th quarter	1st quarter
3272	Glass:						
327213	Container	250	259	253	254	1,020	254
327211	Flat	225	169	241	239	874	239
327993	Fiber	40	36	41	43	160	42
327212	Other	22	12	22	18	74	21
	Total	537	476	557	554	2,120	555
32518	Chemicals	314	291	304	334	1,240	318
325611	Soaps and detergents	70	64	62	59	255	59
322	Pulp and paper	9	10	9	10	38	10
221310	Water treatment <sup>3</sup>	10	9	11	10	40	9
56221	Flue gas desulfurization	33	30	42	44	149	38
4246	Distributors	66	59	59	57	241	64
	Other	87	77	95	88	347	84
	Total domestic consumption <sup>4</sup>	1,130	1,020	1,140	1,160	4,440	1,140
	Exports <sup>5</sup>	1,740	1,080	1,220	1,400	5,430	1,730
	Canada	48	40	40	44	172	38
	Total industry sales <sup>6</sup>	2,860	2,090	2,360	2,550	9,860	2,870
	Total sales from plants	2,920	1,960	2,320	2,670	9,870	2,640
	Total production	2,910	2,070	2,310	2,700	9,990	3,020

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

<sup>2</sup>North American Industry Classification System.

<sup>3</sup>Includes soda ash equivalent from soda liquors and purge liquors sold to power plants for water treatment. Sales of mine water are excluded.

<sup>4</sup>Imports reported by the producer/importer have been distributed into appropriate end-use categories listed above.

<sup>5</sup>As reported by producers; includes Canada. Data may not necessarily agree with those reported by the U.S. Census Bureau for the same periods.

<sup>6</sup>Represents soda ash from domestic origin (production and inventory changes) and imports and exports. Includes soda ash sold by coproducers and distributed by purchasers into appropriate end-use categories.