

Mineral Industry Surveys

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ZINC IN MAY 2021

Domestic mine production (recoverable) of zinc in May 2021 was 65,500 metric tons (t) (tables 1, 2). Mine production (recoverable) for the year through May was 286,000 t of zinc in concentrate, 10% more than that for the same period in 2020. Average daily mine production in May was 2,110 t, 13% more than that in the previous month and 39% more than that in May 2020 (fig. 1).

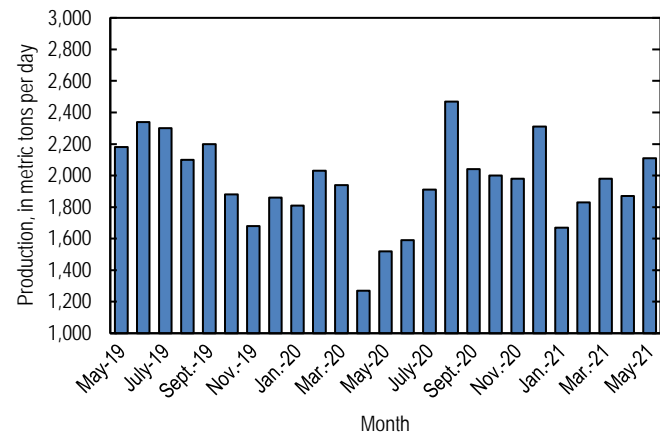


Figure 1. Average daily domestic zinc mine production (recoverable) from May 2019 through May 2021.

Stocks and Prices

Global London Metal Exchange Ltd. (LME) stocks of Special High Grade (SHG) zinc were 281,550 t at the end of May 2021, 3% less than stocks at the end of the previous month but almost three times higher than those at the end of May 2020 (fig. 2, table 8). Reported off-warrant stocks of SHG zinc in LME-approved warehouses at the end of May 2021 increased to 77,043 t from 73,737 t at the end of April 2021 (London Metal Exchange Ltd., 2021a, b).

The monthly average S&P Global Platts Metals Week North American SHG zinc price in May 2021 was \$1.42 per pound,

5% more than that in the previous month and 47% more than that in May 2020. The May 2021 average LME cash price for SHG zinc was \$2,970.29 per metric ton (\$1.35 per pound), 5% more than that in the previous month and 51% more than that in May 2020 (fig. 3, table 7).

The North American premium to the LME cash price in May 2021 averaged 7.7 cents per pound, slightly more than that in the previous month but slightly less than that in May 2020 (fig. 3, table 7).

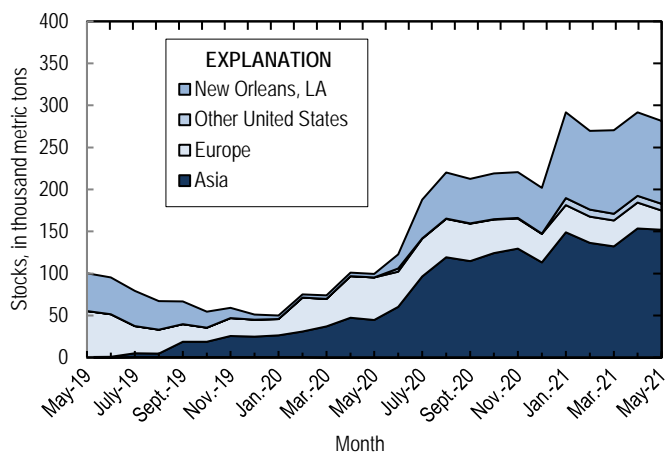


Figure 2. Global LME stocks of Special High Grade zinc, monthend, from May 2019 through May 2021. Source: London Metal Exchange Ltd.

References Cited

- London Metal Exchange Ltd., 2021a, Off warrant stock reporting April 2021: London, United Kingdom, London Metal Exchange Ltd. (Accessed June 17, 2021, via <https://www.lme.com/en-GB/Market-Data/Reports-and-data/Warehouse-and-stocks-reports/Off-warrant-stock-reporting>.)
- London Metal Exchange Ltd., 2021b, Off warrant stock reporting May 2021: London, United Kingdom, London Metal Exchange Ltd. (Accessed July 20, 2021, via <https://www.lme.com/en-GB/Market-Data/Reports-and-data/Warehouse-and-stocks-reports/Off-warrant-stock-reporting>.)

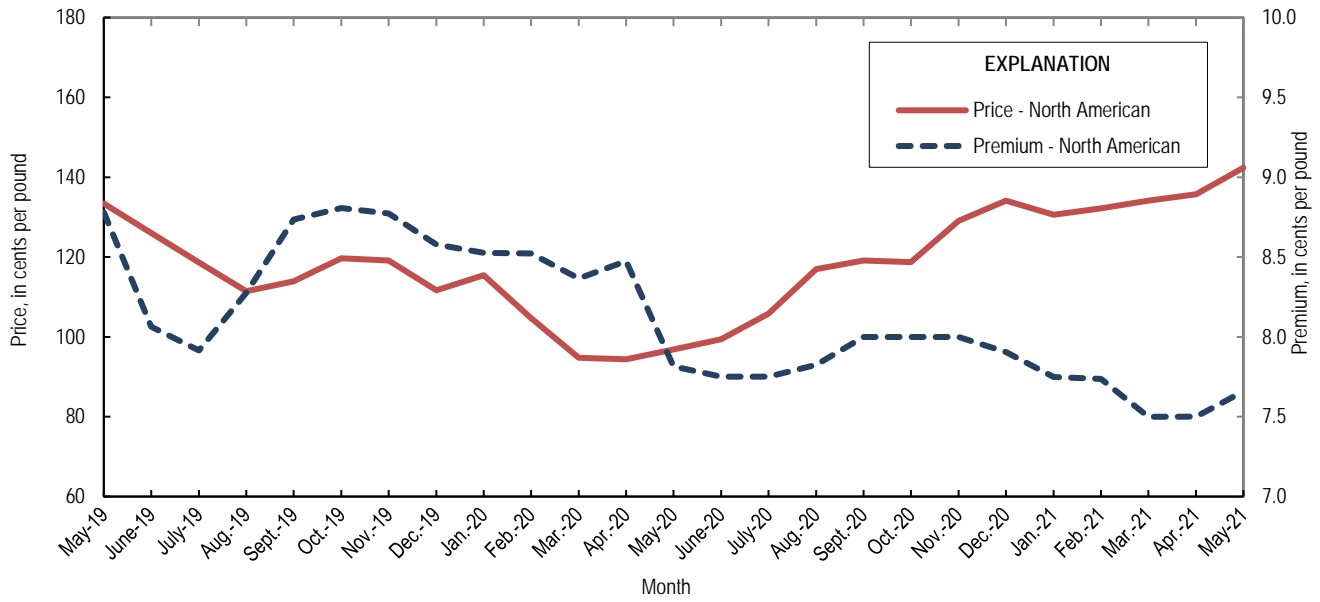


Figure 3. Average monthly North American price and premium for Special High Grade zinc from May 2019 through May 2021. Source: S&P Global Platts Metals Week.

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TABLE 1
SALIENT ZINC STATISTICS¹

(Metric tons, unless otherwise specified)

	2020	2021		
	January– December ^p	April	May	January– May ²
Production:				
Mine, zinc content of concentrate ³	718,000	57,300	66,900	292,000
Mine, recoverable zinc ³	697,000	56,100	65,500	286,000
Smelter, refined zinc ^e	180,000	18,000	18,000	90,000
Consumption of refined zinc, apparent ^{4, 5}	878,000	72,700	68,800	364,000
Imports for consumption:				
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	3,170	70	195	6,420
Refined zinc	700,000	54,900	50,900	276,000
Exports:				
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	546,000	4,190	11,400	57,400
Refined zinc	2,480	205	86	2,610
Price:⁶				
London Metal Exchange cash, average, dollars per metric ton	2,264.42	2,827.35	2,970.29	2,808.04
North American, ⁷ average, cents per pound	110.79	135.75	142.39	135.00

^eEstimated. ^pPreliminary.

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 zinc, lead, and bulk concentrates.

⁴Smelter production plus imports for consumption minus domestic exports.

⁵Apparent consumption of refined zinc in 2020 and 2021 may not reflect actual consumption owing to changes in unreported stocks, potentially related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

⁶Special High Grade Zinc.

⁷S&P Global Platts Metals Week.

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

(Metric tons)

Period	Mine ²		Smelter ^e
	Zinc content	Recoverable	
2020:			
May	48,500	47,000	15,000
June	49,100	47,600	15,000
July	61,100	59,400	16,000
August	78,800	76,400	16,000
September	62,900	61,100	16,000
October	63,900	62,000	18,000
November	61,100	59,300	18,000
December	73,600	71,500	18,000
January–December	718,000	697,000	180,000
2021:			
January	53,000 ^r	51,900 ^r	18,000
February	52,300	51,200	18,000
March	62,600	61,300	18,000
April	57,300	56,100	18,000
May	66,900	65,500	18,000
January–May	292,000	286,000	90,000

^eEstimated. ^rRevised.

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. SHIPMENTS OF
GALVANIZED STEEL SHEET AND STRIP^{1,2}

Period	Quantity (metric tons)
2020:	
May	872,000
June	1,170,000
July	1,190,000
August	1,310,000
September	1,360,000
October	1,400,000
November	1,360,000
December	1,410,000
January–May	6,000,000
January–December	15,200,000
2021:	
January	1,360,000
February	1,260,000
March	1,470,000
April	1,530,000
May	1,540,000
January–May	7,160,000

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant

Source: American Iron and Steel Institute.

TABLE 4
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ZINC¹

(Gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material	2020		2021			
	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	May		January–May ²	
			Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	3,170	\$4,410	195	\$378	6,420	\$5,970
Unwrought:						
Refined zinc	700,000	1,600,000	50,900	147,000	276,000	775,000
Zinc alloys	1,370	3,680	714	2,020	2,710	7,590
Wrought:						
Bars, rods, profiles, wire	3,260	10,200	346	1,220	1,630	5,830
Plates, sheets, strip, foil	2,570	11,500	184	1,080	654	3,340
Ash and residues:						
Zinc dross and skimmings	3,800	5,680	401	776	1,880	3,470
Other (zinc content)	1,130	717	97	178	885	791
Other:						
Powders, flakes, dust	24,600	83,700	2,010	7,550	11,200	42,300
Waste and scrap	11,400	15,800	1,120	1,790	5,130	8,680
Chemicals:						
Lithopone	1,150	4,200	84	260	822	2,220
Zinc oxide	102,000	252,000	9,790	27,400	47,400	125,000
Zinc chloride	275	1,640	34	212	81	554
Zinc sulfate	92,600	70,900	10,300	9,740	43,100	39,500
Zinc sulfide	964	4,720	69	367	460	2,410

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

²May include revisions to previously published data.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
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		
	2020	2021		2020	2021	
		May	January–May ²		May	January–May ²
Ore and concentrate (zinc content):						
Canada	--	194	300	--	194	300
China	1,060	--	59	1,060	--	59
Germany	--	--	47	--	--	47
Mexico	(3)	1	395	(3)	1	395
Peru	2,100	--	5,620	2,100	--	5,620
Total	3,170	195	6,420	3,170	195	6,420
Refined zinc:						
Australia	33,000	298	596	2,000	1,300	3,100
Belgium	24,100	--	--	1	--	--
Brazil	21,900	--	--	13,400	1,000	1,000
Canada	489,000	39,400	204,000	489,000	39,400	204,000
China	108	--	(3)	108	--	(3)
Germany	--	6	860	--	6	860
Korea, Republic of	39,100	--	9,110	21,100	--	9,140
Mexico	130,000	5,820	42,300	130,000	5,820	42,300
Netherlands	1,470	--	--	--	--	--
Peru	44,400	3,360	13,500	44,400	3,360	13,500
Poland	100	99	99	100	99	99
Spain	20,000	--	--	123	--	2,670
Taiwan	24	--	--	24	--	--
Other	(3)	--	(3)	(3)	--	(3)
Total	803,000	48,900	270,000	700,000	50,900	276,000
Oxide:						
Australia	538	17	78	538	17	78
Canada	42,600	3,810	19,600	42,600	3,810	19,600
China	175	2	65	175	2	65
Germany	1,160	134	731	1,160	134	731
Greece	798	--	120	798	--	120
Japan	868	70	239	868	70	239
Mexico	43,100	3,250	19,200	43,100	3,250	19,200
Netherlands	9,030	1,420	4,750	9,030	1,420	4,750
Peru	3,850	1,000	2,330	3,850	1,000	2,330
Other	258	78	311	258	78	311
Total	102,000	9,790	47,400	102,000	9,790	47,400

-- 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 6
U.S. EXPORTS OF ZINC¹

(Gross weight, unless otherwise specified)

Material	2020		2021			
	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	May		January–May ²	
			Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Quantity (metric tons)	Value (thousands)
Ore and concentrate (zinc content)	546,000	\$804,000	11,400	\$24,300	57,400	\$104,000
Unwrought:						
Refined zinc	2,480	6,810	86	296	2,610	8,100
Zinc alloys	19,900	54,000	1,870	5,990	10,100	31,400
Wrought:						
Bars, rods, profiles, wire	9,500	28,900	940	3,040	4,550	14,500
Plates, sheets, strip, foil	5,460	20,300	1,140	3,630	3,770	14,200
Ash and residues:						
Hard zinc spelter	9,150	12,300	1,080	2,180	5,820	10,600
Other (zinc content)	23,000	30,700	2,100	3,700	11,400	18,600
Other:						
Powders, flakes, dust	13,500	49,100	1,050	3,840	4,160	14,600
Waste and scrap	25,000	29,600	3,510	3,980	15,400	18,400
Chemicals:						
Lithopone	522	1,900	38	180	185	931
Zinc oxide	44,900	56,000	4,380	7,330	30,400	43,900
Zinc chloride	419	747	13	23	181	299
Zinc sulfate	507	507	127	92	342	287
Zinc sulfide	1,420	13,000	164	1,940	1,020	8,340

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

²May include revisions to previously published data.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 7
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	2020	2021	
		May	January-May ²
Ore and concentrate (zinc content):			
Australia	63,300	--	--
Belgium	40,000	--	--
Canada	287,000	4,140	22,300
Finland	15,700	--	--
Germany	21,100	--	--
Italy	5,290	--	--
Japan	38,400	4,790	7,280
Korea, Republic of	56,500	2,480	15,500
Peru	120	--	--
Spain	18,400	--	12,300
Other	31	4	15
Total	546,000	11,400	57,400
Refined zinc:			
Canada	962	42	528
India	297	20	20
Mexico	833	7	2,030
Vietnam	164	--	--
Other	223	18	26
Total	2,480	86	2,610
Oxide:			
Australia	503	20	20
Brazil	284 [†]	3	84
Canada	3,290	408	1,650
China	232	46	109
France	253	(3)	94
India	385	13	263
Mexico	38,500	3,780	27,200
United Kingdom	218	38	136
Other	1,210	68	872
Total	44,900	4,380	30,400

[†]Revised. -- 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 8
AVERAGE PRICES FOR SPECIAL HIGH GRADE ZINC

Period	North American		London Metal Exchange	
	Premium ¢/lb.	Price ¹ ¢/lb.	cash ²	
			¢/lb.	\$/t
2020:				
May	7.8	96.87	89.06	1,963.40
June	7.8	99.40	91.65	2,020.61
July	7.8	105.83	98.08	2,162.24
August	7.8	117.00	109.17	2,406.83
September	8.0	119.15	111.15	2,450.50
October	8.0	118.75	110.75	2,441.55
November	8.0	129.10	121.10	2,669.69
December	7.9	134.11	126.21	2,782.36
January–December	8.1	110.79	102.71	2,264.42
2021:				
January	7.7	130.57	122.82	2,707.70
February	7.7	132.17	124.43	2,743.20
March	7.5	134.13	126.63	2,791.65
April	7.5	135.75	128.25	2,827.35
May	7.7	142.39	134.73	2,970.29
January–May	7.6	135.00	127.37	2,808.04

¹S&P Global Platts 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: S&P Global Platts Metals Week.

TABLE 9
LONDON METAL EXCHANGE (LME) STOCKS OF SPECIAL HIGH GRADE ZINC, END OF PERIOD

(Metric tons)

Period	United States			Asia	Europe	Other	Total LME
	Baltimore, MD	New Orleans, LA	Total				
2020:							
May	--	4,175	4,175	44,700	50,675	25	99,575
June	3,825	16,675	20,500	60,425	41,625	--	122,550
July	475	46,075	46,550	96,525	44,900	--	187,975
August	475	54,650	55,125	119,300	45,700	--	220,125
September	475	52,950	53,425	114,575	44,575	--	212,575
October	475	54,500	54,975	124,200	40,025	--	219,200
November	475	54,500	54,975	129,700	35,825	--	220,500
December	475	54,500	54,975	113,025	34,075	--	202,075
2021:							
January	8,150	102,150	110,300	149,000	32,450	--	291,750
February	8,150	93,850	102,000	136,325	31,400	--	269,725
March	8,150	99,300	107,450	132,150	30,900	--	270,500
April	8,150	99,300	107,450	153,650	30,650	--	291,750
May	8,150	98,575	106,725	151,925	22,900	--	281,550

-- Zero.

Source: London Metal Exchange, Ltd.