

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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## SODA ASH IN FEBRUARY 2008

U.S. natural soda ash production in February was 878,000 metric tons (t), 5% lower than the previous month's revised production of 922,000 t, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. Final 2007 production data was 11.1 million metric tons (Mt). Ending inventories for February 2008 were 190,000 t, 14% lower than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in February was 1.37 Mt. Total production of chemical caustic soda was withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

Apparent consumption of soda ash in January 2008 was 523,000 t, 2% higher than in January 2007, and ending stocks were 15% lower.

Exports and imports of soda ash in January 2008 were 387,000 t and 1,870 t, respectively.

The trends in soda ash statistics for January 2008, compared with those of January 2007, were as follows: production was 7% higher; imports were 291% higher (an unusually high quantity that may or may not indicate the beginning of an increase in imports); exports, 2% higher; and apparent consumption, 2% higher.

All percentages in this report were computed using unrounded data.

Also included in this report is Table 6 that shows reported consumption of U.S. soda ash in 2007.

**Note:**

The final average annual value for soda ash sales in 2007 was \$103.53 per short ton.

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

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Soda ash		Wyoming trona production
	Production <sup>2</sup>	Ending stocks	
2007:			
January-February	1,740	XX	2,820
February	880	227	1,400
March	962	238	1,590
April	880	208	1,450
May	950	242	1,460
June	926	198	1,310
July	985	207	1,500
August	971	213	1,490
September	890 <sup>r</sup>	251	1,110 <sup>r</sup>
October	920	203	1,450 <sup>r</sup>
November	903	158	1,450
December	936	206	1,510
January-December	11,100	XX	17,200 <sup>r</sup>
2008:			
January	922 <sup>r</sup>	221	1,510 <sup>r</sup>
February	878	190	1,370
January-February	1,800	XX	2,880

<sup>r</sup>Revised. XX Not applicable.

<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, IN JANUARY 2008<sup>1,2</sup>

Country	Quantity (metric tons)	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousands)	Unit value
Mexico	84,600	\$13,700	\$162
Indonesia	53,400	7,770	145
Brazil	53,200	7,410	139
Canada	39,900	5,520	138
Venezuela	32,400	5,290	163
Belgium	17,600	2,160	123
Saudi Arabia	15,200	2,430	160
Chile	14,000	2,710	193
Argentina	14,000	2,490	178
Thailand	13,000	1,770	136
United Arab Emirates	11,800	1,790	152
Other	37,800	5,920	156
Total or average	387,000	58,900	152

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

<sup>2</sup>February 2008 data were not available at time of publication.

<sup>3</sup>Free alongside ship value at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3  
U.S. EXPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY, IN 2008<sup>1,2</sup>

(Metric tons)

Country	January	Total	% of total
Argentina	14,000	14,000	4
Australia	9,000	9,000	2
Belgium	17,600	17,600	5
Brazil	53,200	53,200	14
Canada	39,900	39,900	10
Chile	14,000	14,000	4
Colombia	8,500	8,500	2
Guatemala	8,500	8,500	2
Indonesia	53,400	53,400	14
Jamaica	7	7	(3)
Mexico	84,600	84,600	22
New Zealand	5,250	5,250	1
Saudi Arabia	15,200	15,200	4
South Africa	6,580	6,580	2
Thailand	13,000	13,000	3
United Arab Emirates	11,800	11,800	3
Venezuela	32,400	32,400	8
Total	387,000	387,000	100

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

<sup>2</sup>February 2008 data were not available at time of publication.

<sup>3</sup>Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4  
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH<sup>1,2</sup>

Period	Quantity (metric tons)	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousands)
2007:		
January	477	184
February	501	148
March	763	215
April	394	140
May	1,200	418
June	405	118
July	1,150	262
August	610	200
September	855	316
October	1,910	423
November	412	152
December	465	184
January-December	9,140	2,760
2008, January	1,870	326

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

<sup>2</sup>February 2008 data were not available at time of publication.

<sup>3</sup>Cost, insurance, and freight value at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5  
U.S. APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons)

Period	Production	Imports	Exports	Net stock		Apparent consumption <sup>2</sup>
				Increase	Decrease	
2007:						
January	864,000	477	381,000	--	29,500	513,000
February	880,000	501	445,000	--	33,000	468,000
March	962,000	763	434,000	11,200	--	517,000
April	880,000	394	420,000	--	30,400	491,000
May	950,000	1,200	431,000	33,900	--	487,000
June	926,000	405	378,000	--	43,600	592,000
July	985,000	1,150	521,000	9,030	--	456,000
August	971,000	610	398,000	6,160	--	568,000
September	890,000 <sup>r</sup>	855	394,000	37,700	--	459,000 <sup>r</sup>
October	920,000	1,910	425,000	--	47,700	545,000
November	903,000	412	513,000	--	45,100	436,000
December	936,000	465	392,000	47,800	--	497,000
January-December	11,100,000	9,140	5,130,000	--	83,400	6,030,000
2008:						
January	922,000 <sup>r</sup>	1,870	387,000	14,500	--	523,000
February	878,000	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

<sup>r</sup>Revised. NA Not available. -- 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 6  
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	2007				Total	
		2006	First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter		Fourth quarter
3272	Glass:						
327213	Container	1,480	360	384	367	345	1,460
327211	Flat	1,120	256	274	271	280	1,080
327993	Fiber	263	54	55	51	50	210
327212	Other	177	42	43	33	36	154
	Total	3,040	712	756	722	711	2,900
32518	Chemicals	1,790	426	453	436	441	1,760
325611	Soaps and detergents	514	132	120	106	105	463
322	Pulp and paper	87	25	21	23	22	91
221310	Water treatment <sup>3</sup>	89	24	25	26	23	98
56221	Flue gas desulfurization	128	31	30	36	33	130
422	Distributors	260	61	59	88	89	297
	Other	207	52	47	51	52	202
	Total domestic consumption	6,110	1,460	1,510	1,490	1,480	5,940
	Exports <sup>4</sup>	4,910	1,280	1,320	1,300	1,350	5,250
	Canada	431	112	91	100	103	406
	Total industry sales <sup>5</sup>	11,000	2,740	2,830	2,790	2,830	11,200
	Total sales from plants	10,900	2,740	2,830	2,820	2,820	11,200
	Total production	11,000	2,710	2,760	2,850	2,760	11,100

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

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

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

<sup>4</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>5</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.