

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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## U.S. PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES IN THE FOURTH QUARTER 2008

U.S. mine and plant production data for selected mineral commodities are provided monthly (or quarterly) by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System (FRS), for use in preparing its index of industrial production and the related capacity indexes and capacity utilization rates. These measures cover manufacturing, mining, and electric and gas utilities, and they are among the key economic indicators monitored by the FRS in determining monetary policy. The data in this report include current and prior months' data provided to the FRS, some of which have been revised.

Mineral commodity production fell in the fourth quarter of 2008 compared with that of the third quarter reflecting the overall decline in the U.S. economy, as well as some normal seasonal declines. Significant declines in domestic production for construction materials (cement, gypsum, construction sand and gravel, and crushed stone) for 2008 compared with those of

2007 largely can be attributed to declines in the domestic housing market (table 1). According to the U.S. Census Bureau and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (2009), housing starts in 2008 were 33% less than the level in 2007. Zinc and iron ore production decreased about 1% and 15%, respectively, in the fourth quarter of 2008 compared with those in the third quarter; however, they grew about 9% and 2%, respectively, as compared with those of 2007 based on strong first-half performance.

**Reference Cited**

U.S. Census Bureau and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2009, New residential construction in December 2008: Washington, DC, U.S. Census Bureau and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, January 22, 6 p.

Mineral commodity	Percentage change, fourth quarter 2008 vs. third quarter 2008 <sup>1</sup>	Percentage change, 2008 total vs. 2007 total <sup>1</sup>
Aluminum (secondary)	-9	6
Cement	-21	-8
Gypsum	-15	-16
Iron ore	-15	2
Phosphate rock	-14	1
Sand and gravel, construction	-31	-15
Soda ash	2	2
Stone, crushed	-24	-16
Zinc	-1	9

<sup>1</sup>Percent change based on unrounded numbers.

TABLE 1  
U.S. PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES, BY QUARTER<sup>1,2</sup>

Mineral commodity		2007				2008				Year total	
		First	Second	Third	Fourth	First	Second	Third	Fourth	2007	2008
		quarter	quarter	quarter	quarter	quarter	quarter	quarter	quarter		
Aluminum <sup>3</sup>	thousand metric tons	243	233	231	217	219	232	278	252	924	981
Cement <sup>4</sup>	million metric tons	18.0	25.6	26.3	22.3	17.1	24.0	24.4	19.3 <sup>e</sup>	92.3	84.9 <sup>e</sup>
Gypsum <sup>5</sup>	do.	5.4	5.4	5.6	5.0	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.0 <sup>e</sup>	21.4	18.1 <sup>e</sup>
Iron ore <sup>6</sup>	do.	11.4	13.7	13.5	13.4	12.9	13.9	14.1	12.1 <sup>e</sup>	52.0	53.0 <sup>e</sup>
Phosphate rock <sup>7</sup>	do.	7.1	7.7	7.4	7.7	7.8	7.6	7.9	6.8 <sup>e</sup>	29.7 <sup>r,8</sup>	30.0 <sup>e</sup>
Sand and gravel, construction <sup>9,10</sup>	do.	207 <sup>r</sup>	352 <sup>r</sup>	380 <sup>r</sup>	283 <sup>r</sup>	168 <sup>r</sup>	296 <sup>r</sup>	318	220 <sup>e</sup>	1,230	1,040 <sup>e</sup>
Soda ash <sup>6</sup>	do.	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	11.1	11.3
Stone, crushed <sup>9,10</sup>	do.	299 <sup>r</sup>	443 <sup>r</sup>	472 <sup>r</sup>	377	258	383 <sup>r</sup>	400	306 <sup>e</sup>	1,600	1,340 <sup>e</sup>
Zinc <sup>11</sup>	thousand metric tons	181	184	208	196	212	206 <sup>r</sup>	213	211 <sup>e</sup>	769	842 <sup>e</sup>

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. <sup>r</sup>Revised. do. Ditto.

<sup>1</sup>Based on data available as of February 10, 2009.

<sup>2</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

<sup>3</sup>Aluminum alloys produced at secondary smelters in the United States.

<sup>4</sup>Portland and blended cement shipments.

<sup>5</sup>Calcined production.

<sup>6</sup>Mine production.

<sup>7</sup>Marketable mine production.

<sup>8</sup>Total does not equal sum of year's quarterly data due to adjustments to annual data that are not broken out by quarter.

<sup>9</sup>Sold or used.

<sup>10</sup>Excludes Alaska and Hawaii; included in 2007 and 2008 year totals.

<sup>11</sup>Recoverable mine production.