

Mineral Industry Surveys

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U.S. PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES IN THE THIRD QUARTER 2012

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 for guidance in determining national monetary policy. The data in this report include current and prior months' data provided to the FRS, some of which have been revised.

The increase in domestic production of construction materials (cement, construction sand and gravel, and crushed stone) compared with those in the second quarter of 2012 (table 1) may reflect an increase in construction after several years of decline. Total construction spending during the first three quarters of 2012 was 8.9% more than that in the corresponding period of 2011 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). The U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2012) reported that privately owned housing starts in the first

three quarters of 2012 were 26.6% higher than those in the first three quarters of 2011.

Molybdenum production in the United States through the first three quarters of 2012 was substantially lower than that in the same period of 2011 primarily because of reduced production from the Thompson Creek Mine in Idaho compared with production in the same period of 2011. Through the first three quarters of 2012, zinc production also was lower, mainly because of reduced milling rates and lower zinc ore grades at the Red Dog Mine in Alaska and the temporary closure of the Lucky Friday Mine in Idaho. Closure of the Lucky Friday Mine also principally was responsible for lower silver production.

References Cited

- U.S. Census Bureau, 2012, September 2012 construction at \$851.6 billion annual rate: Washington, DC, U.S. Department of Commerce, November 1, 4 p. (Accessed November 19, 2012, at <http://www.census.gov/construction/c30/pdf/release.pdf>.)
- U.S. Census Bureau and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2012, New residential construction in September 2012: Washington, DC, U.S. Department of Commerce, October 17, 6 p. (Accessed November 19, 2012, at <http://www.census.gov/construction/nrc/pdf/newresconst.pdf>.)

TABLE 1
PRODUCTION TRENDS FOR SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES

Mineral commodity	Percentage change, 3d quarter 2012 vs. 2d quarter 2012 ¹	Percentage change, YTD, 3d quarter 2012 vs. YTD, 3d quarter 2011 ¹
Aluminum (secondary)	-6	-3
Cement	2	10
Copper	6	4
Gold	9	(2)
Gypsum	10	5
Iron ore	3	-4
Lead	1	1
Molybdenum	-6	-16
Phosphate rock	5	7
Sand and gravel, construction	9	2
Silver	-2	-11
Soda ash	10	4
Stone, crushed	5	1
Zinc	--	-7

-- Zero.

¹Percentage change based on unrounded data.

²Less than 0.5%.

TABLE 2
U.S. PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES, BY QUARTER^{1,2}

Mineral commodity	2011								2012			
	1st quarter–				1st quarter–				1st quarter–			
	1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter
Aluminum ³ thousand metric tons	199	219	236	219 ^r	872 ^r	216 ^r	202 ^e	653	213 ^r	216 ^r	202 ^e	631 ^e
Cement ⁴ million metric tons	11.8	17.9 ^r	20.1	16.9	66.6 ^r	20.1	20.5 ^e	49.7	14.2	20.1	20.5 ^e	54.7 ^e
Copper ⁵ thousand metric tons	265	275	277	297	1,110	276	292	816	278	276	292	846
Gold ⁵ metric tons	57.2	59.3	59.0	58.4	234	56.7	61.6	176	56.5	56.7	61.6	176
Gypsum ⁶ million metric tons	3.1	2.9	3.0	2.9	11.9	3.1	3.4 ^e	9.0	3.0	3.1	3.4 ^e	9.0
Iron ore ⁷ do.	12.4	13.7	13.9	13.7	53.6	12.6	12.9 ^e	40.0	12.7	12.6	12.9 ^e	38.3 ^e
Lead ⁵ thousand metric tons	81.7	84.6	82.6	84.7	334	83.0	84.0	249	83.6	83.0	84.0	249
Molybdenum ⁵ do.	16.6	18.4	14.8	12.9	63.7 ⁸	13.9	13.1 ^e	42.0 ^e	15.0	13.9	13.1 ^e	49.9
Phosphate rock ⁹ million metric tons	7.0	6.8	7.4	6.9	28.1	7.9 ^r	8.3 ^e	21.2	6.5	7.9 ^r	8.3 ^e	22.7 ^e
Sand and gravel, construction ¹⁰ do.	124 ^r	216 ^r	263	199 ^r	802	230 ^r	250 ^e	603	136	230 ^r	250 ^e	616 ^e
Silver ⁵ metric tons	286	287	271	278	1,120	255	844	754	247	255	251	844
Soda ash ⁷ million metric tons	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.8	10.7	2.6	2.9	8.3	2.7	2.6	2.9	7.9
Stone, crushed ¹⁰ do.	198	312 ^r	351	282	1,140	316 ^r	861	865 ^e	217 ^r	316 ^r	333 ^e	861
Zinc ⁵ thousand metric tons	186	184	194	180	743	175 ^r	563	525	174	175 ^r	175	563

^aEstimated. ^rRevised. ^{do.} Ditto.

¹Based on data available as of November 13, 2012.

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

³Aluminum alloys produced at secondary smelters in the United States, less primary aluminum consumed, primary silicon consumed, and other alloying ingredients consumed.

⁴Data are shipments of domestically produced portland and blended cement, including cement made from imported clinker, as a proxy for actual domestic cement production.

⁵Recoverable mine production.

⁶Calcined production.

⁷Mine production.

⁸Total does not equal sum of year's quarterly data owing to adjustments to annual data that are not broken out by quarter.

⁹Marketable mine production.

¹⁰Sold or used; quarterly survey based on sample survey.