



Zinc production in 1972 attained a record value of \$474.5 million despite a further reduction of 5,592 tons in mine production. Canada remained the world's leading mine producer.

Capital expenditures for new installations and equipment in the mineral industry were \$1,592.6 million, a decrease of 9.6% from the previous year. Repair expenditures to existing facilities were \$781.8 million, down 5.1% from 1971. Total expenditures in the minerals sector were \$2,096.7 million, reflecting the heavy investment required in the industry. Expenditures were equivalent to 32.7% of the total value of mineral production in 1972.

Over-all capital expenditures decreased in the minerals sector and increased in the mineral fuels sector (excluding coal). The decrease was largely attributable to completion of a number of metal mine projects, particularly open-pit mines in British Columbia. Investment in iron mines increased slightly to \$270.5 million. Completion of some projects in the Quebec-Labrador area will probably result in reduced capital expenditures in 1973. Capital expenditures in other mineral areas, non-metallics, coal and structural materials decreased 32.8% from the previous year. Some of this decrease can be attributed to the recent heavy spending on coal mines and to operational problems in the coal industry that have resulted in the diversion of capital for rationalization or replacement of some facilities.

Capital expenditures in the mineral fuels sector (excluding coal) increased to \$809 million, an increase of 9.2% over the previous year, with more emphasis being placed on exploration activity in areas where new finds of gas and oil have been reported. Expenditures in this sector are expected to increase substantially in the next few years.

The volume index of mineral production, which measures the mining industry's absolute growth (1961 = 100), increased 4.7% to 191.5 from 182.9 in 1971; the 1960-72 average annual rate of growth was 5.8%. In comparison the volume index of total industrial production increased 6.8% to 196.8 from 184.2 in 1971 and the average annual rate of growth in the period 1960-72 was 6.1%.