

May 15, 2003

For more information, contact  
Ryan Puckett  
847.972.9136  
[rpuckett@cement.org](mailto:rpuckett@cement.org)  
[www.cement.org/newsroom](http://www.cement.org/newsroom)

## **Clearer Vision for Economic Recovery Surfaces, PCA Monitor Reports**

SKOKIE, Ill. – The April U.S. edition of *The Monitor*, a monthly analysis of trends in the construction and cement industries published by the Portland Cement Association, reports that the recent U.S. victory in Iraq will increase the speed of economic recovery and the magnitude of economic growth for 2003. Despite the growth outlook, construction spending is expected to decrease modestly during 2003, with robust activity predicted for 2004.

Key statistics from the April U.S. edition of *The Monitor*:

- Portland cement consumption declined 1.3 percent in January, the fourth consecutive monthly decline;
- Blended cement consumption increased a sharp 30.1 percent after weakness in most of the fourth quarter of last year;
- Masonry cement consumption was essentially flat in January, declining a fractional 0.3% from year-ago levels;
- Cement and clinker imports increased 2.8 percent in December. For all of 2002, imports declined by 6.5 percent.

Reflecting on January 2003 data from several government-issued reports including the U.S. Geological Survey, *The Monitor* breaks down national economic trends, reports on cement consumption and provides an in-depth analysis of construction activity for the residential, commercial and public sectors.

*The Monitor* is available to PCA members and the media upon request.

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