



## LAKE CARRIERS' ASSOCIATION



# U.S.-Flag Shipping on the Great Lakes Down in 2025

CLEVELAND – U.S.-flag Great Lakes freighters (lakers) carried 71.3 million tons of cargo in 2025, an 8.9 percent decrease from a year ago. 2025 cargo movement on the Great Lakes was 8.1 percent below the fleet's 5-year average.

Except for salt shipments, which increased by 4.1 percent, all commodity shipments decreased in 2025. Iron ore shipments were down 10.8 percent from 2024 to 39.1 million tons. Coal cargos declined to 6.5 million tons, a decrease of 12 percent. Limestone shipments of 20.1 million tons were below last year's shipments by 4.7 percent. Cement cargos saw a decrease of 1 percent, while sand and grain shipments were down 26.5 percent and 13.1 percent, respectively, in 2025.

**U.S.-Flag Dry-Bulk Cargo Carriage on the Great Lakes  
2020-2025 and Long-Term Average  
(net tons)**

Commodity	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Average 2020-2024
<b>Iron Ore</b>							
Direct Shipments	33,422,404	37,960,232	35,370,648	39,008,635	41,041,726	36,723,733	37,360,729
Transshipments	3,637,614	3,690,957	2,017,176	3,375,654	2,876,166	2,372,408	3,119,513
<b>Total - Iron Ore</b>	<b>37,060,018</b>	<b>41,651,189</b>	<b>37,387,824</b>	<b>42,384,289</b>	<b>43,917,892</b>	<b>39,096,141</b>	<b>40,480,242</b>
<b>Coal</b>							
Lake Superior	4,930,728	7,268,985	6,160,250	5,367,531	5,173,375	4,356,393	5,780,174
Lake Michigan	560,057	827,962	878,467	803,237	842,896	1,457,199	782,524
Lake Erie	1,764,650	2,255,738	2,262,121	2,230,065	1,318,754	643,912	1,966,266
<b>Total - Coal</b>	<b>7,255,435</b>	<b>10,352,685</b>	<b>9,300,838</b>	<b>8,400,833</b>	<b>7,335,025</b>	<b>6,457,504</b>	<b>8,528,963</b>
Limestone	20,694,823	24,141,410	23,704,683	24,631,568	21,062,713	20,071,204	22,847,039
Cement	3,441,467	3,612,012	3,748,705	3,732,534	3,497,443	3,460,088	3,606,432
Salt	866,354	1,162,396	1,230,538	1,158,665	1,225,424	1,276,199	1,128,675
Sand	411,165	500,055	653,695	734,591	846,102	621,756	629,122
Grain	314,849	366,154	356,503	314,513	312,345	271,357	332,873
<b>Totals</b>	<b>70,044,110</b>	<b>81,785,901</b>	<b>76,382,786</b>	<b>81,356,993</b>	<b>78,196,944</b>	<b>71,254,249</b>	<b>77,553,347</b>

### About Lake Carriers' Association

Since 1880, Lake Carriers' has represented the U.S.-flag Great Lakes fleet, which today can move more than 90 million tons of cargos annually that are the foundation of American industry, infrastructure, and power: iron ore, stone, coal, cement, and other dry bulk materials such as grain, salt, and sand. More information is available at [www.lcaships.com](http://www.lcaships.com).

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