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Steel Import Permits Down 6% in May
Import Market Share at 21%

Washington, D.C. - Based on the Commerce Department's most recent Steel Import Monitoring and Analysis (SIMA) data, the American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI) reported today that steel import permit applications for the month of May totaled 2,579,000 net tons (NT). This was a 6% decrease from the 2,746,000 permit tons recorded in April and a 2% increase from the April preliminary imports total of 2,535,000 NT. Import permit tonnage for finished steel in May was 1,768,000 NT, down 8% from the preliminary imports total of 1,915,000 NT in April. Year-to date (YTD) 2011 total and finished steel import permit tons would annualize at 27,697,000 NT and 20,855,000 NT, up 16% and 11%, respectively, vs. the 23,929,000 NT and 18,857,000 NT imported in 2010. The estimated finished steel import market share in May was to 21%, the same as the 2011 YTD market share.

In May, the largest finished steel import permit applications for offshore countries were for Korea (222,000 NT, down 28% from April), Japan (145,000 NT, up 36%), China (114,000 NT, up 19%), Turkey (80,000 NT, down 32%) and Germany (77,000 NT, up 6%).

Finished steel import permits for major products that registered large increases in May vs. the April preliminary include wire rods (up 26%) and oil country goods (up 14%).

In commenting on the May 2011 SIMA data, Thomas J. Gibson, AISI president and CEO, stated that, "In spite of an 8 percent decline in finished steel imports in May, import market share -- at 21 percent -- remains stubbornly high in the context of current economic conditions. These conditions include a slower pace of economic recovery and a domestic steel capacity utilization rate that is under 75 percent. We must therefore maintain enhanced vigilance with respect to dumped and subsidized imports and the need for strong and effective enforcement of our trade laws and customs procedures."

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AISI serves as the voice of the North American steel industry in the public policy arena and advances the case for steel in the marketplace as the preferred material of choice. AISI also plays a lead role in the development and application of new steels and steelmaking technology. AISI is comprised of 25 member companies, including integrated and electric furnace steelmakers, and 118 associate and affiliate members who are suppliers to or customers of the steel industry. AISI's member companies represent approximately 80 percent of both U.S. and North American steel capacity. For more news about steel and its applications, view AISI's Web site at www.steel.org.

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