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

## **War Determines Pace of Economic Recovery, PCA Monitor Reports**

SKOKIE, Ill. – The March U.S. edition of *The Monitor*, a monthly analysis of trends in the construction and cement industries published by the Portland Cement Association, reports the length of war with Iraq will determine the pace of economic recovery in the construction industry. Furthermore, anything short of “success” could serve as the catalyst that prompts a recession.

Reflecting on December 2002 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.

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

- February construction spending declined 0.5 percent with a flat performance in the residential sector;
- Portland cement consumption declined 5.5 percent in December and 2002 consumption was down 4.0 percent;
- Blended cement consumption was flat in December and tracked down 0.9 percent for the year;
- Masonry cement consumption increased 1.1 percent in December and 2002 consumption declined 1.0 percent;
- Cement and clinker imports declined 6.5 percent in 2002.

The Monitor is available online at [http://www.portcement.org/pdf\\_files/monitor032003.pdf](http://www.portcement.org/pdf_files/monitor032003.pdf).

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