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Beer Shipments Rise 2.5% in March

Beer Institute says taxable removals climbed from a year earlier, though the first quarter remained below 2025 levels

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Beer shipments subject to federal excise tax in the United States rose 2.5% in March from a year earlier, according to an estimate released Tuesday by the Beer Institute, a trade group that tracks industry volume.

The group said brewers made 12.7 million barrels of taxable removals in March 2026, up from 12.395 million barrels in March 2025. The estimate is an early measure of beer moving out of breweries and into the U.S. market, and it is often used as a gauge of demand.

For the first three months of the year, however, the picture remained softer. The Beer Institute estimated taxable removals at 32.5 million barrels through March, down 2.1% from 33.182 million barrels in the same period a year earlier.

The monthly figures showed a mixed start to 2026. January taxable removals fell to 9.6 million barrels from 10.607 million barrels a year earlier, a decline of 9.5%. February was nearly flat at 10.2 million barrels, compared with 10.18 million barrels in February 2025, a gain of 0.2%. March then recovered some of that ground with the year-over-year increase.

The Beer Institute described the numbers as an unofficial estimate based on taxable removals shipments by beer brewers and federal tax data reported by the Treasury Department’s Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau.

The next estimate, for April 2026 taxable removals, is scheduled for release on June 9.