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MSRB: Trades Up; Disclosure Documents Down in 1Q 2016.

WASHINGTON - The par amount and number of municipal securities trades rose in the first quarter of this year, compared to both the previous and same quarters last year, according to Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board statistics posted Thursday.

But the number of continuing disclosure documents received by the board dropped to 46,623 in the first quarter of this year from 47,934 during the same period last year, the board said.

The par amount traded was \$634.7 billion, slightly higher than the \$618.5 billion traded in the first quarter of last year and a lot higher than the \$507.3 billion traded in the fourth quarter.

The total number of trades was 2.27 million, up about 1% from the first quarter of last year and 6.5% from the fourth quarter, the MSRB said.

The most frequently traded muni was a 30-year fixed-rate revenue bond that the Parish of St. John the Baptist in Louisiana sold for Marathon Oil Corp. in June 2007 to help finance the expansion of an existing oil refinery and related facilities located in the parish. The issuance amount was \$1 billion, with a coupon of 5.13%, and the bonds were not subject to the alternative minimum tax. The MSRB data showed a par amount of \$776.3 million of the bonds with 5,792 trades - more than twice the next highest amount of 2,093 trades of the South Carolina Public Service Authority's Series A 2016 tax-exempt refunding bonds.

The most actively traded, in terms of par amount, was an almost \$2.8 billion 16-year general obligation refunding bond with a 4.00% interest rate sold in March 2007 by Unified School district No. 230 in Johnson/Miami County, Kansas. The bonds were insured.

Customer purchases of munis increased slightly to an average daily par amount of \$5.10 billion in the first quarter, compared to \$4.98 billion in the same period as last year. The average daily number of customer purchases totaled 15,187 in the first quarter, which was higher than 15,006 of similar trades during the same period in 2015.

Only about \$407.8 million or 8% of customer purchases per day was of \$100,000 or less of munis, nearly the same as \$396.1 million or 8% for the same quarter last year.

Both variable rate demand obligation and auction rate securities resets declined in the first quarter from the same period in 2015. VRDO resets were 120,950, compared to 133,873 while ARS resets were 2,214, compared to 2,284.

The Bond Buyer

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