ASBESTOS

(Data in thousand metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: One firm in California accounted for 100% of domestic production. Asbestos was consumed in roofing products, 50%; friction products, 33%; gaskets, 12%; and other, 5%.

Salient Statistics—United States:	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997[e]
Production (sales), mine	14	10	9	10	9
Imports for consumption	31	26	22	22	21
Exports[1]	28	18	15	15	13
Shipments from Government stockpile excesses	—	—	—	—	—
Consumption, apparent	32	27	22	22	21
Price, average value, dollars per ton, f.o.b.	435	506	W	W	W
Stocks, producer, yearend	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment, mine and mill, number	70	30	30	30	30
Net import reliance[2] as a percent of apparent consumption	9	30	32	32	38

Recycling: Insignificant.

Import Sources (1993-96): Canada, 99%; and other, 1%.

Tariff: Item	Number	Most favored nation (MFN) 12/31/97	Non-MFN[3] 12/31/97
Asbestos	2524.00.0000	Free	Free.

Depletion Allowance: 22% (Domestic), 10% (Foreign).

Government Stockpile:

Stockpile Status—9-30-97[4]
(Metric tons)

Material	Uncommitted inventory	Committed inventory	Authorized for disposal	Disposal plan FY 1997	Disposals FY 1997
Amosite	30,394	—	30,849	30,849	—
Chrysotile	8,875	—	8,814	8,814	—
Crocidolite	33	—	33	33	—

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Events, Trends, and Issues: Domestic sales of asbestos decreased slightly from those of 1996. Imports and exports also decreased according to the Bureau of the Census. Some exports under the export category were likely to have been reexports, asbestos-containing products, or nonasbestos products. Exports of asbestos fiber were estimated to be approximately 9,000 tons. Apparent consumption decreased slightly. Almost all of the asbestos consumed in the United States was chrysotile. Canada remained the largest supplier of asbestos for domestic consumption.

World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:

	Mine production		Reserves[5]	Reserve base[5]
	1996	1997[e]		
United States	10	9	Moderate	Large
Brazil	170	170	Moderate	Moderate
Canada	521	510	Large	Large
China	250	250	Large	Large
Kazakstan	225	225	Large	Large
Russia	720	720	Large	Large
South Africa	90	85	Moderate	Moderate
Zimbabwe	165	160	Moderate	Moderate
Other countries	139	130	Large	Large
World total (rounded)	2,290	2,260	Large	Large

World Resources: The world has 200 million tons of identified resources and an additional 45 million tons classified as hypothetical resources. The U.S. resources are large, but are composed mostly of short fibers.

Substitutes: Numerous materials substitute for asbestos in products. The substitutes include calcium silicate; carbon fiber; cellulose fiber; ceramic fiber; glass fiber; steel fiber; wollastonite; and several organic fibers, such as aramid, polyethylene, polypropylene, and polytetrafluoroethylene. Several nonfibrous minerals were considered as possible asbestos substitutes for products in which the reinforcement properties of fibers were not required. No single substitute was as versatile and as cost effective as asbestos.

[e]Estimated. NA Not available. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.
[1]May include nonasbestos materials.
[2]Defined as imports - exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.
[3]See Appendix B.
[4]See Appendix C for definitions.
[5]See Appendix D for definitions.

U.S. Geological Survey, Mineral Commodity Summaries, January 1998