ASBESTOS

(Data in metric tons unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: Asbestos has not been mined in the United States since 2002, so the United States is dependent on imports to meet manufacturing needs. Asbestos consumption in the United States was estimated to be 820 tons, based on asbestos imports through July 2010. Roofing products were estimated to account for about 72% of U.S. consumption and other applications, 28%.

Salient Statistics—United States:	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010[e]
Production (sales), mine	—	—	—	—	—
Imports for consumption	2,230	1,730	1,460	869	820
Exports[1]	3,410	815	368	59	180
Consumption, estimated	2,230	1,730	1,460	869	820
Price, average value, dollars per ton[2]	451	473	746	787	656
Net import reliance[3] as a percentage of estimated consumption	100	100	100	100	100

Recycling: None.

Import Sources (2006–09): Canada, 90%; and other, 10%.

Tariff: Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations 12-31-10
Crocidolite	2524.10.0000	Free.
Amosite	2524.90.0010	Free.
Chrysotile:		
Crudes	2524.90.0030	Free.
Milled fibers, group 3 grades	2524.90.0040	Free.
Milled fibers, group 4 and 5 grades	2524.90.0045	Free.
Other, chrysotile	2524.90.0055	Free.
Other	2524.90.0060	Free.

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

Government Stockpile: None.

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ASBESTOS

Events, Trends, and Issues: Health and liability issues continue to result in a decline in asbestos use by manufacturers of asbestos products. U.S. apparent consumption has declined to 820 tons in 2010 from 803,000 tons in 1973. In the past 2 years, some of the decline in imports and asbestos consumption probably can be attributed to reduced commercial building construction where asbestos-based roofing compounds may be used. Based on current trends, asbestos consumption is likely to continue to decline in the future. All the asbestos used in the United States was chrysotile, which was imported from Brazil and Canada.

World Mine Production and Reserves:

	Mine production		Reserves[4]
	2009	2010[e]	
United States	—	—	Small
Brazil	288,000	270,000	Moderate
Canada	150,000	100,000	Large
China	380,000	350,000	Large
Kazakhstan	230,000	230,000	Large
Russia	1,000,000	1,000,000	Large
Other countries	19,000	20,000	Moderate
World total (rounded)	2,070,000	1,970,000	Large

World Resources: The world has 200 million tons of identified resources of asbestos. U.S. resources are large but are composed mostly of short-fiber asbestos, for which use is more limited than long-fiber asbestos in asbestos-based products.

Substitutes: Numerous materials substitute for asbestos in products. 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 or rocks, such as perlite, serpentine, silica, and talc, are considered to be possible asbestos substitutes for products in which the reinforcement properties of fibers were not required.

[e]Estimated. — Zero.
[1]Probably includes nonasbestos materials and reexports.
[2]Average Customs value for U.S. chrysotile imports, all grades combined. Prices for individual commercial products are no longer published.
[3]Defined as imports – exports.
[4]See Appendix C for resource/reserve definitions and information concerning data sources.

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