# ASBESTOS

(Data in metric tons unless otherwise noted)

**Domestic Production and Use:** Asbestos has not been mined in the United States since 2002. The United States is dependent on imports to meet manufacturing needs. Asbestos consumption in the United States was estimated to be 950 tons, based on asbestos imports through July 2013. The chloralkali industry accounted for an estimated 67% of U.S. consumption; roofing products, 30%; and unknown applications, 3%.

| Salient Statistics—United States: | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013[e] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Production (sales), mine | — | — | — | — | — |
| Imports for consumption | 869 | 1,040 | 1,180 | 1,610 | 870 |
| Exports[1] | 59 | 171 | 169 | 47 | 25 |
| Consumption, estimated | 869 | 1,040 | 1,180 | 1,020 | 950 |
| Price, average value, dollars per ton[2] | 787 | 786 | 931 | 1,570 | 1,300 |
| Net import reliance[3] as a percentage of estimated consumption | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

**Recycling:** None.

**Import Sources (2009–12):** Canada, 58%; Brazil, 41%; and other, 1%.

| Tariff: Item | Number | Normal Trade Relations 12–31–13 |
|---|---|---|
| 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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**Events, Trends, and Issues:** U.S. imports decreased by 46% and estimated consumption of asbestos decreased by 7% in 2013. The large decline in imports resulted from increased imports and a buildup of inventories in 2012 and a drawdown of stocks during 2013. All asbestos imported and used in the United States was chrysotile, solely sourced from Brazil in 2013. The average unit value of imports declined in 2013. Based on current trends, annual U.S. asbestos consumption is likely to be between 900 and 1,000 tons for the near future.

**World Mine Production and Reserves:** Reserves from Brazil were revised based on new information from the Instituto Brasileiro de Mineraçäo.

| | Mine production | | Reserves[4] |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 2012 | 2013[e] | |
| United States | — | — | Small |
| Brazil | 307,000 | 300,000 | 11,000,000 |
| China | 420,000 | 400,000 | Large |
| Kazakhstan | 241,000 | 240,000 | Large |
| Russia | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | Large |
| Other countries | 300 | 300 | Moderate |
| World total (rounded) | 1,970,000 | 1,940,000 | 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 in asbestos-based products is more limited than long-fiber asbestos.

**Substitutes:** Numerous materials substitute for asbestos. 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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