

## ASBESTOS

(Data in metric tons unless otherwise noted)

**Domestic Production and Use:** The last U.S. producer of asbestos ceased operations in 2002 as a result of the decline in domestic and international asbestos markets associated with health and liability issues. The United States has since been wholly dependent on imports to meet manufacturing needs. In 2018, all of the asbestos minerals imported into and used within the United States consisted of chrysotile and were predominantly shipped from Brazil. Domestic consumption of asbestos minerals in 2018 was estimated to be 750 tons. Actual consumption of asbestos may have been lower owing to stockpiling by companies for future use, but information regarding industry stocks was unavailable. The chloralkali industry, which uses asbestos to manufacture semipermeable diaphragms that prevent chlorine generated at the anode of an electrolytic cell from reacting with sodium hydroxide generated at the cathode, accounted for 100% of asbestos mineral consumption in 2018, based on bill of lading information obtained from a commercial trade database. In addition to asbestos minerals, an unknown quantity of asbestos was imported within manufactured products, including asbestos-containing brake materials, rubber sheets for gaskets, tile, wallpaper, and potentially asbestos-cement pipe and knitted fabrics.

<b>Salient Statistics—United States:</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018<sup>e</sup></b>
Imports for consumption	406	325	747	332	1750
Exports <sup>2</sup>	—	—	—	—	—
Consumption, estimated <sup>3</sup>	406	325	747	332	750
Price, average U.S. Customs value, dollars per ton	1,830	1,880	1,910	1,870	1,900
Net import reliance <sup>4</sup> as a percentage of estimated consumption	100	100	100	100	100

**Recycling:** None.

**Import Sources (2014–17):** Brazil, >99%; and Russia, <1%.

<b>Tariff:</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Normal Trade Relations 12–31–18</b>
	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	2524.90.0055	Free.
	Other, asbestos	2524.90.0060	Free.

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

**Government Stockpile:** None.

**Events, Trends, and Issues:** Consumption of asbestos minerals in the United States has decreased during the past several decades, falling from a record high of 803,000 tons in 1973 to a record low of 325 tons in 2015. Annual consumption has since varied between roughly 330 tons and 750 tons. This decline has taken place as a result of health and liability issues associated with asbestos use, leading to the displacement of asbestos from traditional domestic markets by substitutes, alternative materials, and new technology. The chloralkali industry accounted for all domestic consumption of asbestos minerals in 2018 compared with an estimated 35% in 2010.