

TALC AND PYROPHYLLITE¹

(Data in thousand metric tons unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: Domestic talc production in 2013 was estimated to be 531,000 tons valued at \$18 million. Four companies operated six talc-producing mines in four States in 2013. The top three companies accounted for more than 99% of the U.S. talc production. One company in California shipped from stocks. Montana was the leading producer State, followed by Texas, Vermont, and Virginia. Sales of talc were estimated to be 589,000 tons valued at \$89 million. Talc produced and sold in the United States was used for ceramics, 25%; paper, 22%; paint, 19%; roofing, 9%; plastics, 8%; cosmetics and rubber, 3% each; and other, 11%. About 240,000 tons of talc was imported; more than 75% of the imported talc was used for plastics, cosmetics, and paint applications, in decreasing order by tonnage. The total estimated use of talc in the United States, including imported talc, was plastics, 27%; ceramics, 18%; paint, 16%; paper, 15%; roofing, 6%; cosmetics, 5%; rubber, 3%; and other, 10%. One company in North Carolina mined pyrophyllite. Production of pyrophyllite remained unchanged from that of 2012 and consumption was, in decreasing order by tonnage, in refractory products, ceramics, and paint.

Salient Statistics—United States:	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013^e
Production, mine	511	604	616	515	531
Sold by producers	512	567	567	575	590
Imports for consumption	134	242	285	325	240
Exports	188	240	223	251	170
Shipments from Government stockpile excesses	—	—	—	—	—
Consumption, apparent	457	606	678	589	600
Price, average, processed, dollars per metric ton	111	150	155	152	160
Employment, mine and mill	285	280	290	310	300
Net import reliance ² as a percentage of apparent consumption	E	1	6	13	12

Recycling: Insignificant.

Import Sources (2009–12): China, 35%; Canada, 31%; Pakistan, 18%; Japan, 4%; and other, 12%.

Tariff: Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations 12–31–13
Not crushed, not powdered	2526.10.0000	Free.
Crushed or powdered	2526.20.0000	Free.
Cut or sawed	6815.99.2000	Free.

Depletion Allowance: Block steatite talc: 22% (Domestic), 14% (Foreign). Other: 14% (Domestic and foreign).

Government Stockpile:

Stockpile Status—9–30–13³ (Metric tons)

Material	Uncommitted inventory	Authorized for disposal	Disposal plan FY 2013	Disposals FY 2013
Talc, block and lump	865	865	⁴ 580	—
Talc, ground	621	621	—	—

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Events, Trends, and Issues: Talc production and sales increased slightly in 2013. U.S. exports decreased by 32% from those of 2012. Canada accounted for more than 50% of the decline in exports. Countries that had increased imports of U.S. talc in 2012 generally had lower imports in 2013, based on trade data through July. U.S. imports decreased by 26% from those of 2012. Reduced shipments from Pakistan, which probably included talc from Afghanistan, resulted in most of the decline in U.S. imports. Estimated imports in 2013 were more in balance with demand in the United States than in 2012; it appears that one company imported more talc than required to increase stocks at its mill. Canada and China supplied more than 75% of the talc imported into the United States in 2013.

The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System reported a 2.6% increase in general manufacturing, including automobile and truck manufacture. The U.S. Census Bureau reported that housing starts increased by 19% between August 2012 and August 2013. These trends could lead to increased consumption of talc, if they can be sustained, because talc is used in manufacturing catalytic converter bodies (ceramics), automotive and truck body and underhood components (plastics), paint and coatings (fillers and extenders), and plastics and rubber (fillers and extenders in plastic products, tires, and other rubber components). Talc is used to manufacture such construction products as adhesives, caulks, ceramics, joint compounds, paint, and roofing.

Sales of pyrophyllite remained unchanged in 2013. Sales to industries that use pyrophyllite to manufacture ceramics and paints had limited growth in 2013 owing to the slow recovery of that sector of the economy.

World Mine Production and Reserves:

	Mine production		Reserves ⁵
	2012	2013 ^e	
United States	515	531	140,000
Brazil ⁶	550	540	230,000
China	2,200	2,200	Large
Finland	440	440	Large
France	420	420	Large
India ⁶	662	650	75,000
Japan ⁶	365	370	100,000
Korea, Republic of ⁶	515	480	14,000
Other countries ⁶	1,760	1,800	Large
World total (rounded) ⁶	7,430	7,400	Large

World Resources: The United States is self-sufficient in most grades of talc and related minerals. Domestic and world resources are estimated to be approximately five times the quantity of reserves.

Substitutes: Substitutes for talc include bentonite, chlorite, kaolin, and pyrophyllite in ceramics; chlorite, kaolin, and mica in paint; calcium carbonate and kaolin in paper; bentonite, kaolin, mica, and wollastonite in plastics; and kaolin and mica in rubber.

^eEstimated. E Net exporter. — Zero.

¹Excludes pyrophyllite, unless noted.

²Defined as imports – exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.

³[See Appendix B for definitions.](#)

⁴Included talc, block and lump, and talc, ground.

⁵[See Appendix C for resource/reserve definitions and information concerning data sources.](#)

⁶Includes pyrophyllite.