

TALC AND PYROPHYLLITE¹

(Data in thousand metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Domestic Production and Use: Three companies operated five talc-producing mines in three States during 2024, and domestic production of crude talc was estimated to have increased to 530,000 tons valued at \$27 million. Talc was mined in Montana, Texas, and Vermont. Total sales of talc by U.S. producers were estimated to be 510,000 tons valued at about \$170 million. Talc produced and sold in the United States was used in plastics, 32%; ceramics (including automotive catalytic converters), 21%; paint, 18%; paper, 9%; roofing, 8%; and rubber, 6%. The remaining 6% was for agriculture, cosmetics, export, insecticides, and other miscellaneous uses.

Two companies in North Carolina mined and processed pyrophyllite in 2024. Domestic production data were withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data and were essentially unchanged from those in 2023. Pyrophyllite was sold for ceramic, paint, and refractory products.

Salient Statistics—United States:	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024^a
Production, mine	491	577	511	508	530
Sold by producers	461	556	548	530	510
Imports for consumption	189	278	346	235	210
Exports	196	236	203	204	200
Consumption, apparent ²	454	598	691	561	520
Price, average, milled, dollars per metric ton ³	265	322	298	333	330
Employment, mine and mill, number: ⁴					
Talc	187	334	362	381	350
Pyrophyllite	31	32	37	38	37
Net import reliance ⁵ as a percentage of apparent consumption	E	7	21	6	2

Recycling: Insignificant.

Import Sources (2020–23): Pakistan, 51%; Canada, 25%; China, 12%; and other, 12%. Large quantities of crude talc were estimated to have been mined in Afghanistan before being milled in and exported from Pakistan.

Tariff:	Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations 12–31–24
	Natural steatite and talc:		
	Not crushed, not powdered	2526.10.0000	Free.
	Crushed or powdered	2526.20.0000	Free.
	Talc, steatite, and soapstone; cut or sawed	6815.99.2000	Free.

Depletion Allowance: Block steatite talc, 22% (domestic), 14% (foreign); other talc and pyrophyllite, 14% (domestic and foreign).

Government Stockpile: None.

Events, Trends, and Issues: Canada, China, and Pakistan were the principal sources of United States talc imports in recent years. Imports of talc and related materials were estimated to have decreased by 11% in 2024 compared with those in 2023. Imports from Pakistan decreased by about 42% in 2024 and accounted for about 56% of total imports. Imports from Canada decreased by 5% and accounted for 28% of the total. Imports from China decreased by approximately 57% and accounted for approximately 8% of total imports. Mexico, Canada, and China, in descending order of quantity, were the primary destinations for United States talc exports, collectively receiving about 77% of exports. Exports were estimated to have decreased slightly in 2024 compared with those in 2023.

A talc-mining company headquartered in New York announced in April 2024 that it completed the sale of its subsidiary talc business. The subsidiary had talc-mining and -processing facilities in Montana and Texas. These decisions were made in part owing to the talc industry's multiple legal disputes and concerns about the safety of talc used to manufacture certain products, such as baby powder and cosmetics.

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In August 2024, a global beauty brand headquartered in London, United Kingdom, filed for bankruptcy. Another company, a consumer products company headquartered in New Jersey, announced that it was filing bankruptcy for a third time in September. Both instances were owing to the increasing concerns and legal actions taken against the companies for the presence of asbestos in talcum powder used in popular products.

Ceramic tile and sanitaryware formulations and the technology for firing ceramic tile changed over recent decades, reducing the amount of talc required for the manufacture of some ceramic products. For paint, the industry shifted its focus to production of water-based paint (a product for which talc is not well suited because it is hydrophobic) from oil-based paint in order to reduce volatile emissions. The amount of talc used for paper manufacturing began to decrease beginning in the 1990s and some talc used for pitch control was replaced by chemical agents.

World Mine Production and Reserves: Reserve data for China were revised based on Government reports.

	Mine production ^e		Reserves ⁶
	2023	2024	
United States (crude)	⁷ 508	530	140,000
Afghanistan	170	200	Large
Brazil (crude and beneficiated) ⁸	⁷ 348	480	45,000
Canada (unspecified minerals) ⁸	200	200	NA
China (unspecified minerals)	1,400	1,400	60,000
Finland	⁷ 197	200	Large
France (crude)	400	400	Large
India (steatite) ⁸	1,440	1,400	110,000
Italy (includes steatite)	170	180	NA
Japan ⁸	130	130	100,000
Korea, Republic of ⁸	⁷ 307	310	81,000
Pakistan (steatite)	200	200	NA
South Africa ⁹	200	320	NA
Turkey ⁸	⁷ 233	250	15,000
Other countries (includes crude) ⁸	<u>807</u>	<u>650</u>	<u>Large</u>
World total (rounded)	6,710	6,900	Large

World Resources:⁷ The United States is self-sufficient in most grades of talc and related minerals, but lower priced imports have replaced domestic minerals for some uses. Talc occurs in the United States from New England to Alabama in the Appalachian Mountains and the Piedmont region, as well as in California, Montana, Nevada, Texas, and Washington. Domestic and world identified resources are estimated to be approximately five times the quantity of reserves.

Substitutes: Substitutes for talc include bentonite, chlorite, feldspar, 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. NA Not available.

¹All statistics do not include pyrophyllite unless otherwise specified.

²Defined as sold by producers + imports – exports.

³Average ex-works unit value of milled talc sold by U.S. producers, based on data reported by companies.

⁴Includes only companies that mine talc or pyrophyllite. Excludes office workers and mills that process imported or domestically purchased material.

⁵Defined as imports – exports.

⁶See Appendix C for resource and reserve definitions and information concerning data sources.

⁷Reported.

⁸Includes pyrophyllite.