

TALC AND PYROPHYLLITE

(Data in thousand metric tons unless noted)

Domestic Production and Use: The total estimated crude ore value of 2006 domestic talc production was \$24.9 million. There were 11 talc-producing mines in 7 States in 2006. Companies in Montana, New York, Texas, and Vermont accounted for most of the domestic production. Domestically produced ground talc was used in ceramics, 32%; paint, 20%; paper, 16%; roofing, 8%; plastics, 5%; rubber, 3%; cosmetics, 1%; and other, 15%. Two companies in North Carolina mined pyrophyllite. Production of pyrophyllite increased slightly from that of 2005. Consumption was, in decreasing order by tonnage, in refractory products, ceramics, and paint.

Salient Statistics—United States: ¹	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006^e
Production, mine	828	840	833	856	880
Sold by producers	764	845	854	826	861
Imports for consumption	232	237	226	237	290
Exports	166	192	202	198	185
Shipments from Government stockpile excesses	—	—	(2)	—	—
Consumption, apparent	894	885	857	895	985
Price, average, processed, dollars per ton	98	89	88	86	85
Stocks, producer, yearend	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment, mine and mill	510	460	404	440	435
Net import reliance ³ as a percentage of apparent consumption	7	5	3	4	11

Recycling: Insignificant.

Import Sources (2002-05): China, 45%; Canada, 35%; France, 6%; Japan, 3%; and other, 11%.

Tariff: Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations 12-31-06
Crude, not ground	2526.10.0000	Free.
Ground, washed, 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—9-30-06⁴ (Metric tons)

Material	Uncommitted inventory	Committed inventory	Authorized for disposal	Disposal plan FY 2006	Disposals FY 2006
Talc, block and lump	867	—	867	⁵ 907	—
Talc, ground	1,050	—	1,050	—	—

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Events, Trends, and Issues: Production and sales of talc increased from those of 2005. Exports decreased by 7% compared with those of 2005. Canada remained the major destination for U.S. talc exports, accounting for about 45% of the tonnage. U.S. imports of talc increased by an estimated 14% compared with those of 2005. In 2006, Canada and China supplied approximately 65% of the imported talc. Calculated apparent consumption increased by 10% in 2006. Actual consumption probably increased only 2% to 3% because a significant portion of the increase in talc imports in 2006 probably was stockpiled rather than entered into commerce.

Overall sales into the U.S. talc markets have declined during the past 20 years. Apparent consumption reached a high of 1.05 million tons in 1990 and declined to 857,000 tons in 2004. There has been a mild rebound in U.S. apparent consumption during the past 2 years. Based on current markets, U.S. consumption probably will be in the range of 875,000 to 925,000 tons for the next several years. No major changes in market trends are evident in world markets so world production also is expected to remain relatively stable.

World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:

	Mine production		Reserves ⁶	Reserve base ⁶
	2005	2006 ^e		
United States ¹	856	880	140,000	540,000
Brazil	607	601	180,000	250,000
China	3,000	3,000	Large	Large
Finland	542	550	Large	Large
India	630	640	4,000	9,000
Japan	431	380	100,000	160,000
Korea, Republic of	900	960	14,000	18,000
Other countries	<u>1,280</u>	<u>1,260</u>	<u>Large</u>	<u>Large</u>
World total (rounded)	8,250	8,300	Large	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. NA Not available. — Zero.

¹Excludes pyrophyllite.

²Less than ½ unit.

³Defined as imports – exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.

⁴[See Appendix B for definitions.](#)

⁵Includes lump and block talc and ground talc.

⁶[See Appendix C for definitions.](#)