

PAPER RECYCLING STATISTICS SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa's paper recycling rate represents the volumes of waste paper collected and thus diverted from landfill. It is calculated as a percentage of the waste paper received by South Africa paper recycling mills out of the volumes available for collection and recycling.

However, not all waste paper can be collected and recycled². For this reason, the volume of waste paper available for collection and recycling is calculated as follows: Apparent consumption less paper types unavailable for collection (toilet paper, cigarette papers). We also exclude exports (corrugated boxes that leave our shores along with the fruit, wine and other exports) from the waste paper available for collection and recycling. Secondary imports and exports of corrugated boxes are accounted for in the volumes available for collection.

PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

(All values in metric tonnes)

	Production	Imports	Exports	Consumption
Newsprint	80 467	37 718	14 164	104 021
Printing/writing	306 705	466 281	137 993	634 993
Corrugated materials/container board	1 150 646	223 538	338 583	1 035 602
Other wrapping papers	13 400			13 400
Tissue	266 284	17 785	42 064	242 005
Other paper & board	178 058	15 192	11 795	181 455
Total	1 995 561	760 513	544 599	2 211 475

WASTE PAPER AVAILABLE FOR COLLECTION AND RECYCLING

Consumption of paper, packaging and tissue in SA	2 211 475
Adjusted for net trade of secondary corrugated packaging (imports minus exports)	- 166 724
Less paper that cannot be collected ⁽¹⁾	-242 005
Waste paper available for collection and recycling	1 802 925



DIVERTED FROM LANDFILL

	Paper received by recycling mills	Waste paper imports	Waste paper exports	Used in new packaging paper & tissue
Newspapers	88 718	416	62 041	27 093
Magazines & coated papers	24 219	57	8 460	15 816
Corrugated, solid cases, kraft papers	890 970	47 899	57 052	881 818
Office papers	133 299	246	11 099	122 445
Mixed and other papers	12 140	5 260	6 687	10 713
Total	1 149 346	53 878	145 340	1 057 884

RECYCLING RATES

	2021	2020	2019
% of recycled paper fibre used to make packaging paper and tissue in SA	53.0%	55.1%	53.5%
Paper recycling rate (paper diverted from landfill as a % of available paper)	63.8%	69.8%	68.5%

EXPLANATORY NOTES

¹ Papers unsuitable for collection and recycling include tissue products (such as toilet paper) and cigarette papers due to their function. Tissue paper dissolves and degrades, and cigarette paper is incinerated on consumption making them unavailable for collection and recycling.

