

Paper production, collection and recycling statistics. *South Africa 2025*

PAMSA

Paper and Allied
Manufacturers of
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 African paper recycling mills out of the volumes available for collection and recycling.

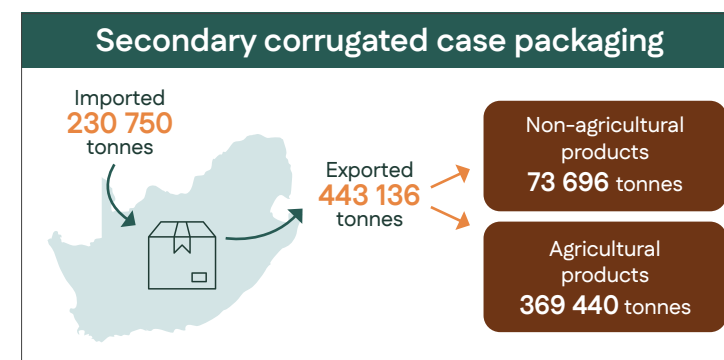
(All values in metric tonnes)

Production and consumption	Production	Imports	Exports	Consumption
Newsprint	42 840	32 696	7 765	67 770
Printing/writing	293 882	460 498	111 995	642 385
Corrugated materials/ container board	1 326 572	342 206	399 025	1 269 752
Other wrapping papers	30 592	-	-	30 592
Tissue	284 452	15 618	53 120	254 219
Other paper and board	81 016	23 128	8 242	95 902
Total	2 059 353	874 145	580 148	2 360 621

Waste paper available for collection and recycling	
Consumption of paper, packaging and tissue in SA	2 360 621
Adjusted for net trade of secondary corrugated packaging (imports minus exports)	- 212 386
Less paper that cannot be collected ⁽¹⁾	- 246 949
Waste paper available for collection and recycling	1 901 286

Recycling rates	2023	2024	2025
Paper recycling rate (paper diverted from landfill as % of available paper)	60.4%	60.0%	63.0%
% of recycled paper fibre used to make packaging paper and tissue in SA	50.4%	48.4%	49.2%

Diverted from landfill	Paper received by recycling mills	Waste paper imports	Waste paper exports	Used in new packaging paper & tissue
Newspapers	48 542	264	33 399	15 407
Magazines & coated papers	21 712	36	4 554	17 194
Corrugated, solid cases, kraft papers	987 995	31 616	151 670	867 940
Office papers, graphic papers	110 552	1 318	13 886	97 984
Mixed and other papers	29 486	3 361	18 586	14 261
Total	1 198 287	36 596	222 096	1 012 787



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.



63.0% Paper recycling rate for 2025
62.0% 5 Year average

Not all waste paper can be collected and recycled. 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.