

2014. The authors believe this large decline is mainly a result of a refinement of the estimation methodology, as described in Appendix B. In addition, based on WTMS data and industry interviews, more than 1 million PTEs of already-culled used tires were shipped into or through California by a number of firms in other western U.S. states, either for direct sale or to a California port for shipment to Mexico or other countries. One reason for shipping used tires to California for sale may be that California regulations require a lower tread depth for used tires. For example, in California passenger tires require a depth of at least 1/32 inch, while federal regulations and those in some other states require 2/32-inch tread. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a total of 1,038,633 used tire units were exported from California ports, with 871,700 of these to Mexico and the remainder, 166,933 units, to other countries, mainly in Central or South America but also to countries in other parts of the world.¹⁰

Waste Tire Imports

In 2015, an estimated 2.3 million PTEs of waste tires were imported from out of state and flowed to several California processors. This estimate does not include already-culled used tires imported into California directly for the purpose of sale or export, as previously discussed. The processors importing these waste tires, in turn, shipped whole waste or used tires and TDM to a variety of market segments, and this share of their shipments was subtracted from the market segment estimates presented in Table 1 for California-generated tires. The amount subtracted from the flows from California processors to each market segment is shown in Table 3.

¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, USA Trade Online. <https://usatrade.census.gov/index.php?do=login>