

Global Mercury Use and Mercury Emissions

Adapted from pages 9 and 68 of the United Nations Environment Programme: *A Practical Guide: Reducing Mercury Use in Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining*. 2012. downloaded from

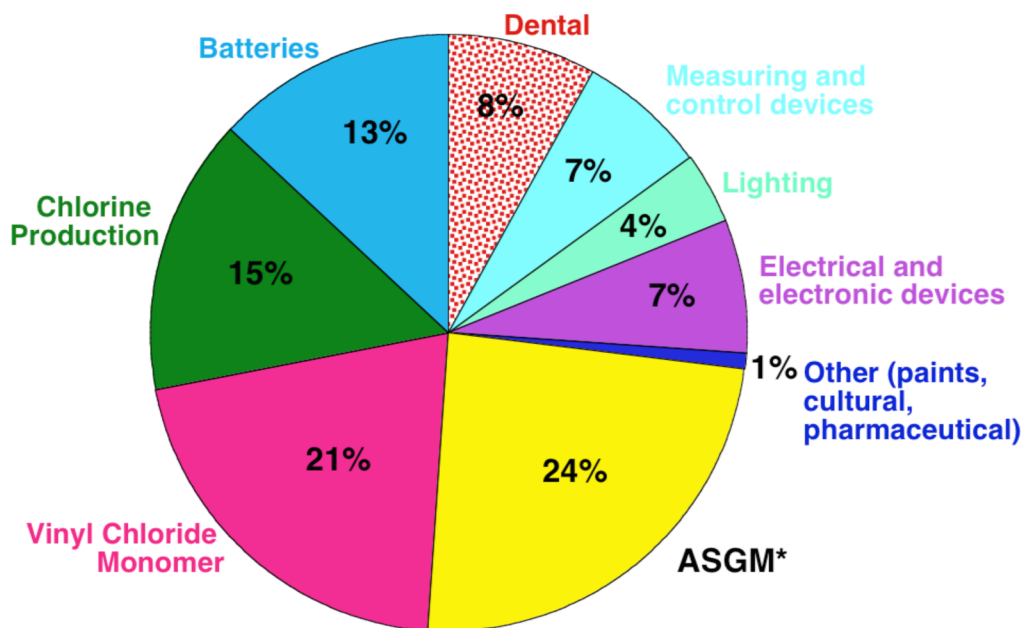
[http://www.unep.org/chemicalsandwaste/Portals/9/Mercury/Documents/ASGM/Techdoc/ UNEP%20Tech%20Doc%20APRIL%202012_120608b_web.pdf](http://www.unep.org/chemicalsandwaste/Portals/9/Mercury/Documents/ASGM/Techdoc/UNEP%20Tech%20Doc%20APRIL%202012_120608b_web.pdf).

The ASGM Sector

- About 90% of the global gold-mining workforce is employed in ASGM, supplying about 15% of gold (approximately 400 tonnes).
- It is estimated that there are 10–15 million miners in 70 different countries.
- When gold prices are about US\$1600 per ounce, ASGM annual gold production is worth US\$20.5 x 10⁹ or approximately US\$2000 per miner per year (if equally distributed).
- Others involved in secondary industries related to ASGM includes 50–100 million people and is worth approximately US\$100 x 10⁹. When split evenly, this equates to being 40 times poorer than an average U.S. citizen.
- Mercury is frequently used to extract gold within ASGM and is often used in unsafe ways due to socioeconomic barriers, resulting in pollution and health issues. Use is about 1400 tonnes per year and represents the largest single global mercury consumption.

See plots on the following page.

Uses of Mercury (Annual Consumption)



Total Annual Consumption:
4167 tonnes

*Large single mercury consumption globally

Sources of Mercury Emissions

Total Annual Emissions:
1921 tonnes

