

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

For Managing Used Oil



Issue:

Two hundred million gallons of used oil are improperly disposed each year. Recycling used oil prevents soil and water pollution, saves a valuable resource and requires less energy to produce. In addition, used oil is regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (the requirements can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations 40 (CFR) Part 279) and by individual state regulations.

What is used oil?

The following fluids are designated as used oil or can be disposed with your used oil: synthetic oils, engine oil, transmission fluid, refrigeration oil, compressor oil, metalworking oils, and industrial hydraulic fluid.

DO NOT MIX these fluids with your used oil: antifreeze, kerosene, gasoline, brake fluid, degreasing solvents, power steering fluid, carburetor cleaner, battery acid/fluids, vegetable oil. Place these liquids in separate containers whenever possible or where required.

Best Management Practices:

- Only use containers or tanks that are in good condition to hold used oil. Inspect the container/tank every time used oil is added. Make sure there is adequate room to hold additional used oil. Only fill container about 90 percent full. Overfilling is a main cause of spills.
- Properly label containers (and associated funnels, drip pans, etc.) as “USED OIL.” Please note that some states (like Massachusetts) require the label to say “WASTE OIL.”
- Keep containers/tanks closed (lids on, caps screwed on tight), except when adding or removing liquid.
- Drain oil filters for a minimum of 12 hours before disposing. Follow the Best Practice for used oil filters.
- Fully drained used oil filters are not a hazardous waste and can be sent to a scrap metal recycler with other scrap metal from your facility.
- Use drip pans to contain drained oil and transfer to the used oil container at a minimum of once a day.
- Only conduct oil handling inside. If a tank is outside, do not add used oil during rain events.
- Provide secondary containment for used oil containers and tanks (even those inside). Secondary Containment is a backup system designed to prevent the release and migration of accumulated liquids out of storage tank system. For example, use an impervious liner or a double walled tank.
- Provide a spill kit near the used oil container/tank and wherever used oil is handled. Inspect the spill kit and resupply as needed.
- DO NOT dispose of used oil down a floor drain.
- Any absorbent or rags containing free flowing used oil must also be handled as used oil. They should be placed in a separate container.
- Consider color-coding containers for used oil, antifreeze, etc. to prevent mixing.
- Educate all employees involved in used oil generation and handling. Include procedures used to prevent spills and what to do in case of a spill. Training should be done upon hire and continued on a regular basis. Keep records of training.
- Record Keeping: The used oil you generate and ship offsite is forever your liability. Use only permitted transporters and disposal companies to handle your used oil.

Note:

A formal Spill, Prevention, Control, and Countermeasures (SPCC) Plan is required if you have a total of more than 1,320 gallons of oil in containers that are each greater than 55 gallons (reference 40 CFR 112).