



## BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR MOTOR VEHICLE RECYCLERS



# DISMANTLING END-OF-LIFE VEHICLES

Motor vehicles are the number one recycled consumer product in the United States. Nationwide, over 11 million vehicles reach the end of their useful service lives every year. Approximately 10 million of these end-of-life motor vehicles are dismantled for reuse of parts and scrap material recycling. Motor vehicle recyclers typically reuse and recycle between 75 and 85 percent (by weight) of the material content of end-of-life vehicles. The industry deserves recognition for benefiting the environment by saving natural resources and reducing landfill needs.

However, careless dismantling practices can result in polluting the environment. Fluid spills are most likely to occur while dismantling, draining, and storing vehicles, parts, and cores. Proper dismantling and draining procedures help prevent pollution caused by motor vehicle fluids seeping into groundwater and air-conditioning refrigerant escaping into the air. In addition, properly storing dismantled vehicles, parts, and cores can also help prevent pollution caused by storm water run-off coming in contact with greasy, oily parts.

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### REMEMBER...

- ✓ Dismantle and drain vehicles on an impervious surface—never on bare ground.
- ✓ Drain differential fluid from all rear-wheel and four-wheel drive vehicles. There are approximately 1–2 quarts of differential fluid that should be stored and recycled with used oil.
- ✓ Do not mix fluids. Recycle and reuse them. Store them in labeled leak-tight containers that are under cover.

### BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

- ▶ Prior to removing parts and dismantling vehicle components, completely drain all vehicle fluids, including antifreeze, brake fluids, engine oils, transmission fluids, windshield washer fluid, power steering fluid, rear axle housing fluids, etc. Do this over an impervious surface.
- ▶ Do not mix the fluids. Recycle, reuse, or dispose of fluids in an appropriate manner.
- ▶ Dismantle and drain vehicles, parts, scrap, and cores in one centralized location that is under a roof and over an impervious surface (for example, concrete). Make sure there are no open drains or cracks in the surface.
- ▶ Use drip pans when unclipping hoses, unscrewing filters, and removing parts. Replace drain plugs when done draining.

- ▶ Fully drain parts and cores on a drain table or drip rack before moving them to a storage area.
- ▶ Keep spill control equipment nearby. Clean up spills immediately.
- ▶ Seal all fluid lines after draining to prevent leaks. Metal lines can be crimped or bent; rubber hoses can be plugged with clamps, balls, or golf tees.
- ▶ Remove and separate recyclable and potentially hazardous components, including the fuel tank, radiator, tires, battery, catalytic converter, air bag units, and mercury switches.
- ▶ Remove and capture air conditioning refrigerants (R-12 and R-134a). Qualified persons, using certified equipment, must perform this work.
- ▶ Remove engines through the hood. Do not tip vehicles on their sides, because this allows fluids to run out and spill on the ground.
- ▶ Establish a good routine for dismantling vehicles and stick with it.
- ▶ At “you-pull-it” facilities (where customers are allowed to remove parts), make sure the fluids are drained from vehicles before customers are allowed to remove parts. Instruct customers on proper procedures to prevent leaks during removal of parts, and provide spill control supplies for convenient customer use.
- ▶ Store engines, transmissions, and other oily, greasy parts off the ground, over an impervious surface, and under cover to prevent soil, groundwater, and storm water contamination. Have spill controls, including drip pans and absorbents handy.
- ▶ Keep an inventory of the vehicles and parts stored at the facility.
- ▶ Be alert and stay safe! Contact the Occupational Safety and Health Administration at (603) 225-1629 for additional guidance about avoiding injury and other hazards associated with dangerous motor vehicle dismantling practices.



Dismantle vehicles over a concrete surface and use drain tables to fully drain parts



*This guide sheet provides general guidance only.*

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

N.H. Department of Environmental Services  
 Waste Management Division--N.H. Green Yards Program  
 29 Hazen Drive, PO Box 95, Concord, NH 03302-0095  
 telephone: (603) 271-2925; fax: (603) 271-2456  
 e-mail: [nhgreenyards@des.nh.gov](mailto:nhgreenyards@des.nh.gov)  
 website: [www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov)



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