

Best Management Practices for N.H. Solid Waste Facilities

Used Oil & Filters

The term “Used oil” includes motor oil, transmission fluid, differential oil, brake fluid, power-steering fluid and transaxle fluid. Used oil is classified as a Hazardous Waste in New Hampshire because it may contain contaminants, including toxic metals and chemicals, that can pollute our waterways and drinking water. Used oil that is not mixed with other substances such as gas, antifreeze or solvents is typically recyclable and can be managed under the **Used Oil Recycling Requirements**, which is a less strict section in the NHDES Hazardous Waste (HW) Rules. Otherwise, it must be handled under the full scope of the HW Rules.

Did You Know?

- Approximately 3 million gallons of used oil are generated in N.H. each year, almost half of which comes from people who change their own oil.
- It takes only one pint of oil to produce a one acre slick on lakes and ponds, which can kill plants, fish and other wildlife.

Solid waste facilities can collect used oil for recycling from residents who change the oil in their personal vehicles. This is called Do-It-Yourselfer (DIY) used oil. You can also collect used oil from businesses or generators that are not DIYs, but only if you register as a Used Oil Marketer and meet other requirements. Contact NHDES for technical assistance.

Options for recycling used oil that has not been contaminated by other substances include:

- Burning the used oil in a registered used oil furnace to heat your facility;
- Having it picked up by an authorized Used Oil Marketer (recycler); or
- Hiring a registered hazardous waste transporter to recycle it.

N.H. municipalities (as well as motor vehicle inspection stations and nonprofit organizations) are eligible to receive grants from NHDES to establish collection centers for DIY used oil and used oil filters. Contact NHDES for more information. State law (RSA 149-M:18) also authorizes towns to charge a fee on motor vehicle registrations, to be used to pay for collection and disposal of certain motor vehicle waste, including used oil.

Best Management Practices for DIY Used Oil & Filters



Tanks and drums are not in secondary containment not under a roof. Partially burying them makes leak inspections impossible, they are not properly labeled and the filler cap is open even though it is not actively being filled. Spills are evident.

- Instruct residents to bring used oil to your facility in a tightly capped container, preferably a rigid plastic clear or translucent container that allows you to inspect the contents for possible mixing with gasoline, solvents or antifreeze. Mixtures can be costly to handle if they are found to be hazardous waste.
- Do not accept open containers such as five-gallon pails.
- Allow only trained facility operators to transfer the contents of DIY jugs to permanent used oil storage.

- Store used oil in metal tanks or drums that are in good condition, on a concrete or other impervious surface and labeled “Used Oil for Recycle.”
- Place the collection tank or drum so that the fill pipe and funnel are positioned no higher than waist level to make pouring easier and to reduce the risk of spilling.
- If stored outdoors, protect from the weather and place used oil collection containers in secondary containment (a leak-proof structure that can hold at least 110% of the volume of the largest container), under a roof.
- Keep used oil collection containers closed when not actively adding or removing oil.
- Post emergency contact information and cleanup instructions in the used oil storage area. Make sure all employees know emergency spill procedures.
- Keep a spill kit in the used oil storage area, including a bucket, absorbent material (for example, kitty litter) and a scoop or shovel.
- Clean up spills right away. If more than 25 gallons are spilled, or if any amount of spilled oil is not immediately cleaned up, you must call NHDES at (603) 271-3899.
- If your facility accepts used oil filters, make sure they are fully drained and punctured or crushed. Fully drained used oil filters can be recycled as scrap metal.
- Transfer used oil to a Used Oil Marketer or Registered Hazardous Waste Transporter only.
- Use a bill-of-lading or manifest when shipping used oil and keep copies of shipment records for at least three years as proof of shipment.
- Any above ground container of petroleum larger than 660 gallons, or multiple containers that collectively hold more than 1,320 gallons, must be registered with NHDES as an above ground storage tank (AST) and meet AST standards. You may exclude up to 1,320 gallons of Used Oil stored for on-premise heating.
- Any underground storage tank (UST), even one partially underground, must be registered with NHDES and meet UST standards.



Tank is indoors, on a concrete surface and is correctly labeled. Customers leave oil jugs on top of tank for facility operator to inspect and empty into tank.



Drums are correctly labeled, have secondary containment and are on a concrete surface, covered by a roof.

For additional information, contact:

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