
ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet



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Management of Fuel and Water Mixtures

Fuels, and in particular gasoline, spilled or leaked into the environment are a major source of water pollution and, at elevated levels, can adversely affect drinking water quality. Therefore, unwanted fuels must be properly handled to ensure that they do not adversely impact the environment. A mixture of fuel and water is often generated through fuel management activities and may be recycled.

Applicability

This policy applies to mixtures of fuels and water generated from fuel management activities, *e.g.*, dispensing, storage. These mixtures include, but are not limited to, gasoline and water mixtures, fuel storage tank bottom water, water/fuel mixtures that are generated as a result of fuel product storage, including any water collected from secondary containment, sumps, and spill buckets. This policy may not apply to tank cleaning wastes, rinsewater, water containing hazardous constituents not found in the fuel product, tank bottom sludge, bilge water and manufacturing wastes.

Description

Fuels and water mixtures are frequently handled as hazardous wastes, however, when properly managed according to the guidelines of this fact sheet, fuel and water mixtures may not need to be handled as hazardous wastes. According to the New Hampshire Hazardous Waste Rules, commercial chemical products are not wastes when they are recycled by being reclaimed. The US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has stated that a fuel and water mixture is considered an off-specification product and is excluded from being a solid waste when it is recovered and used as a fuel. Therefore, fuel and water mixtures generated as a result of fuel management activities may be managed as an off-specification commercial chemical product and not as a hazardous or solid waste provided that the mixture only contains fuel and water, and the fuel portion is legitimately reclaimed and used as a commercial fuel. To manage these mixtures as a commercial chemical product the generator must:

- Manage the material as a product, in an environmentally sound manner prior to reclamation.
- Ship the material to a **legitimate reclamation** facility.
- Ensure that the facility reclaiming the fuel product is able to demonstrate that legitimate reclamation is occurring.
- Ensure the recovery facility properly manages the leftover wastewater as a waste and thus a potential hazardous waste when it is disposed.
- Maintain records to document that the mixture is not a waste and is being reclaimed for use as a fuel, *e.g.*, letter from the facility reclaiming the mixture.

If these mixtures are not managed as off-specification commercial chemical products, they are considered wastes. The Hazardous Waste Rules require that all generators of waste determine if their waste is a hazardous waste. Wastes determined to be hazardous must be handled pursuant to the requirements of the Hazardous Waste Rules.

Definition of Legitimate Reclamation

1. The mixture must contain a recoverable quantity of fuel. The recovery facility must be able to demonstrate that fuel reclamation is occurring.
2. The material must be managed according to industry standards for fuel products at the reclamation facility and the recovered fuel product must be either used as a fuel or blended with other fuels.
3. The reclamation process should be able to recover and utilize most if not all the fuel product from a mixture. Low recovery efficiencies indicate that the reclamation may be primarily treatment and not legitimate reclamation.
4. Residual wastewater must be properly disposed of under a wastewater discharge permit issued by the state or local government.

Container/Tank Management

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) has determined that the following conditions must be complied with in order to manage fuel and water mixtures in accordance with this fact sheet:

Storage

- Store containers and tanks on an impervious surface.
- Ensure that containers and tanks are in good condition.
- Secure storage areas against unauthorized entry.
- Inspect storage areas weekly for leaks.
- Cover containers in outside storage areas.
- Keep containers and tanks, stored outside, more than 50 feet from surface water.
- Keep containers and tanks at least 50 feet from storm drains, if no secondary containment.
- Label containers and tanks clearly and visibly, *e.g.*, "Gasoline for Recycle."

Handling

- Operate to minimize the possibility of spills.
- Keep containers and tanks closed and sealed.
- Have spill control and containment equipment readily available.
- Have fire control equipment readily available.

Release Response Information

- Post information on what to do in the event of a spill.

Facilities not managing their fuel and water mixtures in an environmentally sound manner as described above can and shall be subject to full regulation under the New Hampshire Hazardous Waste Rules and RSA Ch. 147-A.

For more information

Questions regarding this fact sheet should be directed to the NHDES Hazardous Waste Management Bureau at (603) 271-2942 or toll-free within New Hampshire at 866-HAZWAST (M-F 8 a.m.-4 p.m.) or email hwcomp@des.nh.gov. For a complete description of the requirements, refer to the New Hampshire Hazardous Waste Rules, Env-Hw 100-1200, available from [NHDES' website](#).