

## Best Management Practices for N.H. Solid Waste Facilities

### Scrap Metal

Scrap metal is highly recyclable and valuable. The price of steel rises and falls, therefore facility operations need to be efficient, clean and safe to be profitable under all market conditions. If not properly managed, scrap metal can lose its value and can also be a source of pollution. For example, leaking components found in white goods (appliances), such as capacitors, ballasts, compressors and pumps, can release pollutants such as polychlorobiphenyls (PCBs), oils, lubricants or refrigerants into the environment. Lawnmowers, vehicle parts and other equipment and machinery are a source of petroleum and gasoline contamination, as well as battery acid and various toxic heavy metals such as lead, cadmium and mercury. Scrap metal from construction or demolition projects may be contaminated with chemical residues, oily wastes, asbestos, PCBs, lead, mercury and other heavy metals that can be harmful. Similarly, tanks, drums and other containers may still contain industrial waste, fuel, oily residues and sludge even when they appear to be empty. Scrap metal items can sometimes contain radioactive material, explosive gasses and vapors, and other serious hazards.

This list does not include all the potential risks that can be encountered in the scrap metal industry. Therefore, operators of scrap metal facilities must understand that this valuable resource can be a source of contamination to land, water and air. They must be aware of the potential hazards, use proper safety equipment and follow best management practices to protect human health and the environment.

#### Did You Know?

- Some scrap metal facilities need a storm water discharge permit from EPA. For more information, contact EPA-Region 1 (Boston) at: (617) 918-1615
- Some types of scrap metal are regulated as a hazardous waste. If in doubt, call the NHDES Hazardous Waste Hotline Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, toll free at (866) HAZWAST (in-state only) or at (603) 271-2942.

**NO!**



Scrap metal is haphazardly stored; contaminants may be leaking into the groundwater.

#### Best Management Practices for Scrap Metal

- Inspect incoming loads to identify materials you are not authorized or willing to accept, as well as hazardous conditions, such as leaking components or asbestos, that require immediate attention and containment.
- Prevent unauthorized access to the facility by installing a fence or barrier to keep out thieves and vandals.
- If your facility buys scrap metal, keep seller identification records, including copies of a driver's license and vehicle information, to guard against purchasing stolen scrap metal and to allow transactions to be traced.

- Inspect incoming tanks and containers to make sure they are empty before adding them to a storage container or stockpile.
- If you accept scrap metal that contains fluids, have the proper equipment and procedures in place to remove the fluids without spilling or leaking them onto the ground.
- Keep spill kits and fire extinguishers nearby, and train employees on the procedures to follow in the event of a fire, spill or other emergency or hazardous condition.
- Separate ferrous metal (iron-containing scrap metal) from non-ferrous metal (aluminum, copper, brass, etc.) and other metals as desired and store them separately to increase the market value of your metal.
- Store scrap metal off the bare ground using the following options.
  - > In transportation containers, covered or under a roof to keep out precipitation.
  - > In stockpiles, on a concrete surface or within concrete bunkers that are covered if piles include greasy, oily items and other possible contamination sources.
- Make sure scrap metal stockpiles are:
  - > Free of plastic, wood and other debris.
  - > Stable by limiting their height and size.
  - > Accessible for fire equipment.
- Divert stormwater runoff away from stockpiles.
- Obtain coverage under the federal stormwater discharge permit and implement the related stormwater management plan as applicable. Contact EPA Region I for more information.
- Inspect stockpiles and storage areas on a regular basis for possible polluting, hazardous or unsafe conditions.
- Handle and store refrigerators and air conditioners in a manner that does not release refrigerants to the air. Have only trained and certified persons remove the refrigerants using EPA approved equipment. See Refrigerants BMP Guidance Sheet.



By collecting scrap metal in a transportation container, you keep it off the ground and only have to handle it once before sending it to a scrap metal dealer. The container is under a roof to keep out precipitation.

**For additional information, contact:**  
 Solid Waste Management Bureau  
 N.H. Department of Environmental Services  
 29 Hazen Drive, PO Box 95 Concord, NH 03302-0095  
 (603) 271-2925 fax: (603) 271-2456  
[solidwasteinfo@des.nh.gov](mailto:solidwasteinfo@des.nh.gov)

