

What is distillery waste and why is it of concern?

Distillery “heads” and “foreshots” may be hazardous waste, and if so, must be managed, stored and disposed of in accordance with both federal and state hazardous waste regulations. Heads and foreshots are comprised of flammable byproducts (such as methanol and other alcohols), which can present a risk to human health and the environment if not disposed of properly.

[Waste determinations](#) must be done at the point the material is determined to be waste and no longer usable in the distillation process. Any waste with a flashpoint below 140 degrees F is considered hazardous.

How should distillery waste be managed?

Flammable byproducts (such as methanol and other alcohols) become a hazardous waste when they are no longer usable. In New Hampshire, it is illegal to dispose of these materials by evaporation, dilution, burning for disposal purposes or putting the materials down the drain (on or off a public sewer). Distillers have several options available to manage the flammable byproducts from the distillation process.

Best management practices

- ✓ Reuse it. Methanol (or other flammable byproducts) becomes a hazardous waste when it is no longer usable. If a business can *beneficially reuse* these materials on-site, they are not considered hazardous waste.
 - An example of a beneficial reuse would be burning for heat, using as fuel to run equipment, reusing in the distillation process, or using as a cleaner or disinfectant.
- ✓ If unable to legitimately reuse or excess material is created that is not able to legitimately be used in a reasonable timeframe, the business must obtain an EPA ID#, register to become a [Small Quantity Hazardous Waste Generator](#) and dispose of the flammable byproducts by using a registered hazardous waste transporter.
- ✓ Place the hazardous waste into a closed container.
- ✓ Label the container “**Flammable-Hazardous Waste.**”
- ✓ Avoid stockpiling. Remove for proper recycling/disposal with a New Hampshire Hazardous Waste Transporter.
- ✓ Store the hazardous waste container where it cannot be accidentally knocked over or easily accessed.
- ✓ Keep a fire extinguisher in the hazardous waste storage area.

For more information

This [fact sheet](#) provides more information about the requirements for Small Quantity Hazardous Waste Generators in New Hampshire. Pollution Prevention Program staff are available to assist with completing the necessary paperwork, answering questions you might have, and helping find a Household Hazardous Waste event near you. Please note this information is only an introduction and does not fully cover the specifics of the hazardous waste regulations.

For more information, please contact the Pollution Prevention Program at [\(603\) 271-6460](tel:6032716460) or NHPPP@des.nh.gov or NHDES Hazardous Waste Management Bureau at 1-866-HAZWAST ([1-866-429-9278](tel:18664299278)) or [\(603\) 271-2942](tel:6032712942). A list of registered New Hampshire hazardous waste transporters, copies of other fact sheets, and the Hazardous Waste Rules are available on the NHDES website at www.des.nh.gov.