



# BMPs

## Best Management Practices for Motor Vehicle Recyclers

### Antifreeze

Automotive antifreeze contains chemicals that can be toxic to people, plants and animals. Therefore, antifreeze from end-of-life vehicles should be managed and stored to prevent spills that can pollute soil, groundwater or surface water.

In order to properly manage used antifreeze, first determine whether it is **waste antifreeze** or **usable antifreeze**.

**Waste antifreeze** is too old or contaminated to perform well as an engine coolant. It must be sent to a proper disposal facility or, preferably, put through a recycling process to restore its quality and make it reusable. **Usable antifreeze** can be reused "as is" and does not need to be recycled to remove impurities and restore its properties as an engine coolant.

To determine whether used antifreeze can be reused "as is" you need to consider its ability to still perform well as an engine coolant. For example, over time, antifreeze can break down to form acids that can corrode a vehicle's cooling system. Antifreeze may also lose its ability to efficiently cool engines and withstand sub-zero temperatures. Antifreeze can also become contaminated with traces of fuel, oil, metal particles and grit from the vehicle's engine and this can impact the performance quality of the antifreeze.

#### Best Management Practices for Antifreeze

- Drain antifreeze from radiators and heater cores soon after vehicles arrive at your facility. Do this over an impervious surface (for example, concrete) and use a drip pan.
- Determine whether the antifreeze is **usable antifreeze** or **waste antifreeze**.

Contamination can also cause antifreeze to "test" positive as a hazardous waste. Therefore, waste antifreeze cannot be poured down the drain or thrown out with the regular trash. Because it can be very costly to send waste antifreeze to a hazardous disposal facility, it makes more sense to have it recycled. In New Hampshire, you can do this under a relaxed set of hazardous waste requirements known as the "*Universal Waste Rules*." Compared to stricter *N.H. Hazardous Waste Rules*, the *Universal Waste Rules* greatly simplifies what you have to do to recycle your waste antifreeze. For more information about managing waste antifreeze under the *Universal Waste Rules*, contact the NHDES Hazardous Waste Assistance Hotline at (603) 271-2942.

#### REMEMBER...

- Never put antifreeze in the trash, on the ground, or down the drain.
- Antifreeze made with ethylene glycol is particularly dangerous because animals and children are attracted to its sweet flavor. Drinking ethylene glycol can cause coma or death.
- You should only offer used antifreeze to others as a product when you know its quality is as good as new antifreeze.

- Sell or give away **usable antifreeze** to someone who will reuse it; inform them that it's used.
- Recycle **waste antifreeze** to restore its quality. Recycling options include: (1) purchasing the proper equipment and doing it yourself, (2) hiring a contractor to come to your facility with a mobile recycling unit, or (3) transporting the waste antifreeze to a "universal waste destination facility" or "universal waste handler" that you know will actually recycle the antifreeze and that meets all other requirements in the *Universal Waste Rules*.
- Do not discharge antifreeze to septic tanks, sewer systems, storm drains, outside surface waters or the ground.
- Store antifreeze in containers or tanks that are in good condition and compatible with the antifreeze. Keep the tanks and containers on a concrete or other impervious surface designed to contain spills and leaks.
- Do not mix antifreeze with any other fluid or waste.
- Clearly label each container or tank with ONE of the following phrases to show how the antifreeze is being managed: "Waste Antifreeze for Recycling," "Waste Antifreeze for Disposal," "Used Antifreeze for Reuse," or "Recycled Antifreeze for Reuse."
- Clearly mark each container or tank with the date the antifreeze was first added. Reuse, recycle or dispose of it within a year of that date.
- Keep antifreeze containers and tanks closed at all times, except when antifreeze is being added to or removed from the container.
- If you store containers of antifreeze outside, you must cover them and provide secondary containment equaling 110% or more of the largest container stored.
- Do not use collection equipment and storage containers that have been previously used to collect other hazardous waste or materials, unless the equipment has been first cleaned.
- Immediately contain and clean up all spills and leaks. Keep spill control equipment nearby.
- Before shipping any antifreeze, make sure the receiving facility has agreed to receive the shipment and is authorized under state law to receive it.

***This guide sheet provides general guidance only.***

**For additional information, contact:**

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