



Shoptalk

A PUBLICATION FOR DANGEROUS WASTE MANAGERS

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Spills—Who do you call?

(Note: The following is for information only. It does not replace state or federal regulations on spill response and reporting. Contact the hazardous waste or spill response staff at your local Ecology regional office if you have questions.)

Spills of hazardous substances can cause problems for people and the environment. They can also cause problems for facility managers when they don't know who to call.

Federal and state laws and rules differ on reporting spills, depending on what is spilled (oil or other hazardous substance) and where it winds up (water/groundwater, air, or soil). In Washington, you must follow the state rules.

A "spill" is any release of material that threatens human health or the environment. State rule requires you to immediately report spills to the authorities. And don't confuse this emergency notification with the federal term "reportable quantity" or your facility's annual dangerous waste report.

The spill could be accidental or intentional. It could be a product, or a waste. It could come from a small, medium, or large quantity generator. It can be liquid, solid, or gas. The overriding factor is the threat it poses.

As a rule of thumb, you should **report a spill when any of the following occur:**

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- Any person needs, or seeks, medical attention.
- The material can enter surface water or groundwater, directly or through a ditch, drain, or crack.
- Plants or animals (includes fish) are ill, injured, stressed, or die.
- The release goes into the air so that it can harm people, animals, or plants.
- You cannot quickly control, contain, and completely clean up a spill to soil with a bucket or shovel.

Under the state dangerous waste rule, you must **immediately report all hazardous material spills to:**

1. All local authorities according to the local emergency plan – check with your local fire department, and
2. The nearest Ecology Regional Office (see page 4 for numbers).

If the spill released anything to the air, you must also report to:

1. The local air authority in Western Washington, or
2. The nearest Ecology Regional Office in Eastern Washington.

If the spill is to water, you must also report to:

1. Washington State Division of Emergency Management, (800) 258-5990 or (800) OILS-911; and
2. National Response Center/US Coast Guard, (800) 424-8802.

Large quantity generators of dangerous waste must have a written contingency plan showing what each person should do in case of a spill or other emergency.

Medium quantity generators must have emergency information posted near emergency communication equipment.

Regardless of generator status, it just makes sense to know ahead of time what to do in an emergency. It's like insurance; you don't need it until you need it, but when you need it, you really need it...and fast.

Ecology's Spill Prevention, Preparedness, and Response Program has more information. See www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/spills/spills.html



Poor "housekeeping" is often the cause of spills.

Used Oil—Don't Mix, Don't Mix, Don't Mix

Ecology has been proclaiming “Don't Mix” for years! Since 2003, Ecology inspectors and field staff have been sampling and testing used oil at locations across the state. What we have found is both good and bad.

The good news is that used oil is cleaner now than when the used oil regulations were first written. In the 1990s, much of the credit can go to removing lead from gasoline. When the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency tested crankcase oil in 1991, they found that 75 percent failed the toxicity characteristic test for one or more chemicals. In 2005, Ecology found that no samples failed the toxicity characteristic for metals when similar samples were tested.

Used oil may still designate using the toxicity characteristic test, but it is because of benzene, which is a normal part of gasoline. In fact, Ecology has found that 95 percent of used oil as it leaves the crankcase is clean enough to burn in space heaters according to the regulations.

The bad news is that after leaving the crankcase, used oil is often contaminated when stored on-site. Ecology found that more than 60 percent of used oil burned in space heaters has the common solvent perchloroethylene mixed into it. More than 25 percent of used oil appears to have gasoline added to it, at levels that make it a fire hazard.

Another Ecology finding from the sampling study is that ash from cleaning used oil burning space heaters is sometimes a dangerous waste. For more information about managing and disposing of this ash, please contact your nearest Ecology regional office.

It is important to keep your used oil clean for several reasons. If you mix dangerous waste with used oil, the entire mixture must be managed as dangerous waste. This will cost you significant time and money. If you mix anything else into used oil, it is no longer only used oil and the used oil rules don't apply. So, you will need to determine if the mixture is a dangerous waste. That alone is costly. Then, if the mixture is a dangerous waste, it will cost even more to dispose of it.

Mixtures of used oil and dangerous waste must be disposed of as dangerous waste, possibly as dangerous waste fuel. They can't be burned as used oil fuel to “recover energy.” And mixing used oil with anything, dangerous waste or otherwise, increases the difficulty and cost of re-refining and hampers the growth of this potential market.

So what should you do? The most important thing is to keep used oil separate from other materials. Review the Ecology publication, *Materials that may or may not be managed as used oil in Washington State*, #06-04-00X (www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/060400X.html). This publication will help you determine what can be managed as used oil, and what cannot be managed as used oil. Ecology plans to publish the results of the sampling efforts early this summer.



Beyond Waste Works to Reduce Waste & Toxics

Ecology staff and others are providing more directed technical assistance to businesses in response to ideas from the Beyond Waste plan. The Beyond Waste plan sets a 30-year vision for Washington “...where most wastes and toxics are eliminated...contributing to economic, social and environmental vitality.”

In one project, staff used “lean manufacturing” techniques at three facilities to minimize waste and the use of hazardous materials. Lean manufacturing tries to find and eliminate all activities that do not add value to a product or service. Ecology plans to hold workshops on these techniques for other interested businesses. The second phase of this project will weave lean manufacturing techniques into the design of a product.

Another project trained technical college students on auto-body painting using new spray guns with laser sights. The laser sights allow operators to use much less paint and still get good results.

Ecology is also developing a statewide program to encourage businesses to go beyond simple compliance in preventing pollution. We are working with a stakeholder advisory committee on strong financial and other incentives. We plan to launch this program in the fall.

We are also redesigning the Web site of the Hazardous Waste and Toxics Reduction Program to make our technical assistance easier to find and understand.

For questions about these and other Beyond Waste projects, contact Chris Chapman at (360) 407-7160 or ccha461@ecy.wa.gov

Visit the Beyond Waste Web site at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/beyondwaste/>

HW Education Fee — Who Pays and Why

In 1990, the Legislature passed the Hazardous Waste Fees law (RCW 70.105E) to fund education for businesses that produce hazardous waste. The money helps Ecology make technical assistance visits, consult by phone, and develop technical assistance materials for these businesses.

Businesses that produce any amount of hazardous waste must pay the annual Education Fee, now set at \$46. Only those businesses that actually generate hazardous waste must pay. For this reason, the law allows businesses to apply for a one-year waiver or complete exemption, depending on their situation.

Ecology grants the one-year waivers on a case-by-case basis. A business may apply for a waiver if they did not generate any amount of hazardous waste in the previous calendar year. Billing will resume the following year.

Businesses that never generate any amount of hazardous waste may apply for an exemption from the fee. Ecology will not bill businesses again that receive an exemption, unless the business begins producing hazardous waste.

Businesses may apply for waivers and exemptions after getting the bill. Ecology mails the bills to businesses the first week of June. For more information on the Education Fee program, visit the Web site at www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/hwtr/edfees/index.html or call Jeri Berube at (360) 407-6733.

Apply Now for the 2007 Governor's Award

The application period is open for the 2007 Governor's Award for Pollution Prevention and Sustainable Practices. Businesses, government agencies, schools, and organizations have until June 1 to submit their applications.

The Governor's Award recognizes applicants that best demonstrate:

- Comprehensive and successful efforts to prevent pollution and to incorporate sustainable practices into their operations; and
- Innovation, leadership and commitment in these efforts.

Some sustainable practices reduce or eliminate the use of toxic materials and reduce or eliminate discharges to the air and water. Other examples include providing a product or service that benefits the environment, buying recycled materials, protecting wildlife habitat, and conserving energy and water.

Applicants must be operating within Washington and be in good standing with environmental regulations. The state honors the winners at a ceremony in the fall. Ecology publicizes their achievements throughout Washington and in national media as desired by the winners.

Visit the Web site for the application form and guidelines: www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/hwtr/GovAward/index.html

To find out more about the award program, contact Mariann Cook Andrews at (360) 407-6740, or email maco461@ecy.wa.gov

Your Right to Know and Be Safe

Every American has a right to know what hazardous materials they may come in contact with at work and at home, and how to protect their health.

Washington passed the Worker and Community Right-to-Know Act in 1984 to help people understand the dangers of hazardous materials where they live and work.

The Washington State Department of Labor and Industries has programs for people who work with hazardous materials. Workers should call 800-423-7233 or 360-902-5459, or visit www.lni.wa.gov/ for:

- Resources about hazardous materials, training, and safety in the work place.
- Private reporting of unsafe work conditions.

Ecology also has free information and assistance for citizens and communities. The Hazardous Substance Information and Education Office (HSIEO) can help people, including workers, with information about hazardous materials. Contact HSIEO at 800-633-7585, e-mail to HSIEO@ecy.wa.gov, or visit www.ecy.wa.gov/HSIEO/ Phones are staffed 9:00 to 4:00, Monday-Friday. Or you can leave a message 24 hours/day.

Next Dangerous Waste Workshops — 2009

The Dangerous Waste Management Workshops will not be held in 2008. This is due to two reasons: Ecology does not plan to change the dangerous waste rules before 2008, and staff members will be extra busy with increased site visits in areas near urban waterways.

In the meantime, generators can get answers to their questions and find information they need from the Program's Web site (www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/hwtr) or by contacting the regional office. (See page 4.)



Have you considered subscribing to the electronic version of Shoptalk? Visit Shoptalk Online at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/hwtr/shoptalkonline/index.html>

Shoptalk

Q What makes a waste “dangerous” or “hazardous”?

A Dangerous or hazardous means the waste is:

- Corrosive – an acid or base that corrodes metal, burns flesh, etc.
- Reactive – explodes or gives off toxic gases under certain conditions.
- Ignitable – burns easily.
- Persistent – accumulates in the environment rather than breaking down.
- Toxic – poisonous.

Wastes may also be considered dangerous or hazardous because of other characteristics such as cancer. (See *Hazardous Waste: More Common than You Think*, #91-12a, www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/9112a.html)

Some wastes, such as mercury, pose the highest risks to human health and the environment. Washington law calls these “acutely hazardous wastes.”

Q What do you mean by “generator”?

A A generator is any person or business who produces dangerous waste, or causes it to become subject to regulation.

Q What do you mean by the term “generator status”?

A A generator’s status refers to how much waste they generate in a month or how much waste they have on-site at any one time.

- Small quantity – generate less than 220 pounds; accumulate less than 2,200 pounds.*
- Medium quantity – generate 220 to 2,200 pounds; accumulate less than 2,200 pounds.*
- Large quantity – generate more than 2,200 pounds or more than 2.2 pounds of acutely hazardous waste; no accumulation limit.

*Or generate and accumulate less than 2.2 pounds of acutely hazardous waste.

Ecology can help you find ways to lower your generator status. Call the offices shown on this page and ask for the Pollution Prevention staff. (www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/hwtr/P2/contacts.html)

Visit Ecology’s Web site
www.ecy.wa.gov

Department of Ecology

Your business is liable for all dangerous wastes generated. If you are uncertain about your responsibilities as a dangerous waste generator, call your nearest Ecology office and ask for a hazardous waste specialist. For information on reducing or recycling dangerous waste, ask for the toxics reduction staff, at:

- Bellevue: (425) 649-7000
- Lacey: (360) 407-6300
- Yakima: (509) 575-2490
- Spokane: (509) 329-3400

If you need this information in an alternate format, please call the Hazardous Waste and Toxics Reduction Program at (360) 407-6700. Persons with hearing loss can call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability can call (877) 833-6341.

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