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Antifreeze Waste Considerations

This guidance document has been produced by the Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment (DWEE) to provide information on managing spent antifreeze and to comply with the applicable hazardous waste regulations. The regulations applying to the management and disposal of antifreeze can be found in Nebraska [Title 128 – Hazardous Waste Regulations](#).

In Title 128, the term “spent” refers to a material that has been used and because of contamination can no longer serve the purpose for which it was produced without processing. This document uses the term “spent antifreeze” because it clearly describes the waste and has a distinct regulatory meaning.

Never dispose of spent antifreeze into a storm sewer or onto the ground.

Never dispose of spent antifreeze into a septic system.

You can reduce the amount of spent antifreeze that your operation generates by replacing standard antifreeze with extended-life antifreeze.

Spent Antifreeze from Households

Wastes generated by and from households are excluded from hazardous waste regulations through the Household Hazardous Waste Exemption. This means that spent antifreeze generated by household do-it-yourselfers performing their own vehicle maintenance is not regulated as a hazardous waste.

Waste Determinations

All waste generators are required to determine if their waste streams are listed hazardous wastes or are characteristic of a hazardous waste (Title 128, Chapter 3 §002, and Chapter 4 §002). There are no Title 128 exemptions or exclusions that apply specifically to spent antifreeze. See the DWEE guidance document “Waste Determinations & Hazardous Waste Testing” for more information on performing waste determinations.

Spent Antifreeze Disposal

Wastes that pass through a sanitary sewer system to a Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTW) are excluded from being a hazardous waste. DWEE strongly recommends that a spent antifreeze generator first coordinate with their POTW before disposing of spent antifreeze to a sanitary sewer. There may be

circumstances depending on the POTW design or capacity that make this disposal method not an option in your area.

Recycling Spent Antifreeze

Spent antifreeze that is determined to be a hazardous waste can be recycled in several ways. Your hazardous waste generator status will usually dictate how to arrange this. On-site recycling is always allowed by Title 128. This can be performed in the generator's own equipment or by a service provider that comes to your site to do the recycling.

Off-site recycling is also allowed, but the generator status drives how you do it. Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generators (CESQGs) can send their spent hazardous waste antifreeze off-site for recycling without using any hazardous waste paperwork or hazardous waste transporters. Small and Large Quantity Generators (SQGs and LQGs respectively) can have their hazardous waste recycled off-site but the spent antifreeze, if determined to be a hazardous waste, is subject to full SQG or LQG regulations.

If you are a SQG or LQG and your spent antifreeze is hazardous waste, that spent antifreeze comes under substantive hazardous waste regulation from the point of generation and must be fully and correctly managed as per Title 128, Chapter 9 for SQGs or Chapter 10 for LQGs while being accumulated prior to recycling. The recycling process itself is exempt from Title 128 regulations.

RESOURCES:

- DWEE Home Page <https://dwee.nebraska.gov/>

Contacts:

- DWEE Main Number (402) 471-2186
- DWEE Toll Free Number (877) 253-2603
- DWEE Hazardous Waste Compliance Assistant (402) 471-8308
- Email questions to: DWEE.moreinfo@nebraska.gov

DWEE Publications:

- Environmental Guidance Document – “Waste Determinations & Hazardous Waste Testing”
- Environmental Guidance Document – “Comparison of Hazardous Waste Generator Requirements”
Guidance documents are available on the DWEE website by clicking “Visit Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (DEE),” selecting “Forms,” and “Publications, Grants & Forms.”
- [Title 128 – Nebraska Hazardous Waste Regulations](#)
Titles are available on the DWEE website by clicking “Visit Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (DEE),” selecting “Resources and Services,” “Laws & Regulations,” and “Rules & Regulations.”

Produced by: Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment, 245 Fallbrook Blvd. Ste.100, Lincoln, NE 68521; (402) 471-2186. To view this and other information related to our agency, visit our website at <https://dwee.nebraska.gov/>.