

## General Tips

- ☑ Buy only what you need, and substitute less or non-toxic materials when feasible.
- ☑ Follow safety precautions and other instructions on the product label.
- ☑ **Keep all products out of the reach of children and pets.**
- ☑ **Never pour vehicle waste into storm drains, sewer, septic system, or onto the ground.**
- ☑ Know where you will dispose of and store materials before doing-it-yourself. Call 1-800-RECYCLE if you are unsure where to take the waste.
- ☑ Keep all fluids separate and labeled to make proper recycling and disposal easier.
- ☑ All automotive wastes can be reduced by using alternate transportation such as walking, bicycling, carpooling, vanpooling and taking the bus.

## Other Information

For information on how to properly dispose of household hazardous waste, local waste reduction/recycling programs, and other recycling information call 1-800-RECYCLE.

## Ecology Regional Offices

Northwest	(425) 649-7000
Southwest	(360) 407-6300
Central	(509) 575-2490
Eastern	(509) 329-3400

*If you require this publication in an alternate format, please contact the Solid Waste & Financial Assistance Program at 360-407-6900 or TTY (for the speech and hearing impaired) at 711 or 800-833-6388.*

# Automotive Waste and the Do-It-Yourselfer



How to reduce, recycle, and dispose of automotive wastes properly and avoid toxic releases.

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## What's The Problem?

Dumping used motor oil in the back yard, down storm drains, or in the garbage contaminates ground or surface water and soil. When used as a dust suppressant or for weed abatement on roads, oil will run off during rains, polluting water with heavy metals and other toxic contaminants. This is a health hazard to wildlife and humans. Used motor oil is the single largest source of oil pollution. One pint of oil can produce a one-acre slick on surface water.

Vehicle batteries contain corrosive materials and heavy metals that may contaminate soil and ground or surface water if disposed of improperly.

Dumping antifreeze on the ground may contaminate soil or surface water sources.

Nearly all of a car's wastes are toxic to varying degrees, and present environmental and human health hazards if disposed of improperly. Toxic materials cause injury or death if ingested, inhaled or absorbed through the skin. None of these materials should end up in a sewer, septic system, storm drain, back yard or empty lot.

It is illegal to discharge automotive waste directly to surface water, storm drains, or onto the ground, where rainfall can carry it into the ground water or nearby surface water. Civil penalties of up to \$10,000 may be imposed. In extreme cases, criminal penalties may also be imposed (RCW 70.95i.060). Property found to be contaminated is difficult to sell without doing expensive cleanup, and the owners of the property may find it difficult to obtain loans against their property once banks are aware of the problem.



Waste Type	Used Motor Oil	Lead-Acid Batteries	Antifreeze	Gasoline	Transmission & Brake Fluid	Degreasers and Solvents	Cleaners and Polishes	CFCs or Freon (Air Conditioner)	Tires
<b>Hazard</b>	Oil picks up heavy metals from engine. Petroleum products are toxic to people, wildlife and plants.	Lead is a toxic heavy metal. Battery acid is corrosive.	Contains ethylene glycol which is toxic. Animals are attracted to its sweet taste and it will kill them.	Flammable and toxic. Contains benzene, a cancer causing chemical that can be inhaled or absorbed through the skin.	Brake fluid is corrosive. Transmission fluid contains petroleum distillates and is ignitable.	Many degreasers contain chlorinated solvents and are very hazardous.	Most contain toxic ingredients. Some contain phosphates which promote the growth of algae in lakes and rivers.	These gases are harmful to the Earth's protective ozone layer.	Tire piles attract rodents, mosquitoes & other pests, & are a fire hazard. Toxics are released to air & water when tires burn.
<b>Storage</b> (Always clearly label the container)	Store in a sealed metal or plastic container. Do not mix with other substances.	Store upright in a sturdy acid-resistant, leak-proof container.	Store in the original plastic containers.	Store in approved containers, away from living area, ignition sources and direct sunlight.	Store separately in original containers.	Store in original containers in a cool, dry location.	Store in original containers.	N/A	Store outside in area protected from fire or rain. Local regulations may limit the number you can store.
<b>How to Avoid Spills or Releases</b> (Always keep securely covered)	Put large drip pan under crankcase before opening. Check for oil leaks regularly & repair them.	Store upright. Place leaking batteries in sturdy, acid-resistant, leak-proof container.	Use large enough pan when flushing radiator. Repair radiator leaks.	Don't overfill your tank.	Follow proper filling and draining techniques.	Follow instructions for proper use to avoid spills.	Use appropriate amounts according to instructions on the container.	Service your AC regularly. Repair leaks. Run your AC once a month to keep seals tight.	Avoid storing a quantity that could become a fire hazard. Tire fires generate toxic smoke & runoff.
<b>How to Clean-up Spills</b>	Clean up immediately with cat litter or absorbent pads.	Neutralize small acid spills (under 2 gallons) using cement, lime or baking soda.	Small spills may be wiped up and discarded in the garbage.	Clean up spills immediately with cat litter or absorbent pads.	Clean up immediately with cat litter or absorbent pads.	Absorb spills and take contaminated absorbent to a hazardous waste collection program.	Absorb spills and take contaminated absorbent to a hazardous waste collection program. See label instructions.	N/A	N/A
<b>Recycling or Disposal Call 1-800-RECYCLE</b>	Recyclable. Do not mix with other substances. Drain oil filter overnight (24 hrs) into drip pan to remove oil residue. Do not use oil as dust suppressant or weed killer or dispose of in a landfill.	Recyclable. Exchange your old battery when purchasing a replacement. Disposal of batteries in garbage is illegal.	Recyclable on limited basis. Use professional services that recycle antifreeze.	Use it up or save for hazardous waste collection program. Do not use as a solvent, paint thinner or weed killer.	Keep separate from used oil. Save for hazardous waste collection program.	Use up according to instructions or share with someone who will. Keep separate from used oil. Save for hazardous waste collection program.	Use up according to instructions or give to someone who will, or save for hazardous waste collection program.	Freon is recyclable. Service at a service station that collects and recycles freon.	Tires can be recycled. Some worn tires can be retreaded.
<b>Safer Alternatives or Reduction Methods</b>	None, however using re-refined oil saves energy and resources. Keeping your car tuned reduces oil use.	Purchasing longer life batteries will reduce the need for replacement and disposal.	N/A	Carpool, plan trips, walk and bicycle. Keep tires properly inflated.	Reduce use by repairing leaks.	Non-toxic and non-flammable alternatives are available. Use water based substitutes whenever possible.	A variety of non-toxic cleaners are available. Use the least toxic product that will accomplish the job.	Use newer, non-toxic refrigerants.	Keep properly inflated. Buy long-lasting and retread tires. Have your worn-out tires "custom" retreaded.
<b>Toxic Trivia</b>	Used motor oil is the single largest source of oil pollution. The 180 million gallons of used oil spilled by do-it yourselfers each year in the U.S. is 16 times that spilled by the Exxon Valdez in Alaska.	A car battery contains 20 pounds of toxic lead and one gallon of corrosive, lead-contaminated sulfuric acid.	Children and pets are attracted to antifreeze because it tastes sweet. They can be poisoned by drinking small amounts of improperly disposed antifreeze.	Washingtonians drove their vehicles more than 54 billion miles in 2000. That's over 51 billion pounds of air pollution released into our air.	These wastes are commonly mixed with used oil making them difficult or impossible to recycle.	Contaminating used oil with these substances could change it from a readily recyclable resource into a hazardous waste.	Commercial car washes pre-treat wash water. Washing your car & degreasing auto parts at home sends detergent and other contaminants directly into surface and groundwater.	The 1990 U.S. Clean Air Act Amendments require all auto air conditioner service stations to retrieve and recycle CFC's.	Tires take at least 800 years to decompose. 10 million burning tires would create an oil spill equivalent to 1/10 the Valdez spill plus large clouds of toxic smoke.