



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 1

1 CONGRESS STREET, SUITE 1100  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02114-2023

CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

December 9, 1999

Mr. Robert A. Beauclair  
Room 8618 Pavillon Parent  
Laval University  
Quebec City Q.C.  
Canada G1K-7PA

re: Used Oil Filters

Dear Mr. Beauclair:

This letter is in response to your correspondence addressed to Mr. Gary Gosbee of this office in which you request a confirmation from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) stating it is within EPA's "norms" to allow the sale of hot-oiled emptied used automobile and truck oil filters. These filters are destined for scrap dealers and scrap automobile processors in the United States (US) and, in particular, the EPA-New England Region. You indicated in your letter that these items would be entering the US at the border of the State of Vermont.

EPA cannot provide you with a specific answer to your request but we can provide the following which is an outline of the Federal (EPA) requirements regarding used oil and material containing used oil. Please note that the State of Vermont, in accordance with Section 3006 of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), is authorized to administer and enforce the base RCRA program in lieu of the federal program. In particular, Vermont has regulatory authority regarding solid and hazardous waste determinations and the handling of used oil filters. Therefore, you should consult with the appropriate State personnel listed below regarding your request.

In accordance with the Federal regulations found at Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 279, Section 10(c) [40 C.F.R. § 279.10(c)], regarding used oil and materials containing used oil, such materials might not be subject to the Used Oil regulations of Part 279. These regulations do not apply if "the used oil has been properly drained or removed to the extent possible such that no visible signs of free-flowing oil remain in or on the material". However, you also need to check with the state whether full hazardous waste regulations apply. Your oil filters may still be subject to the full Federal hazardous waste regulations of 40 C.F.R. parts 124, 260

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through 266, 268, and 270. However, the Federal regulations at 40 C.F.R. § 261.4(b)(13) specifically exclude non-terne plated used oil filters from the definition of hazardous waste if the filters are not mixed with any of the wastes listed in Subpart D of 40 C.F.R. Part 261 and if these filters have been gravity hot-drained using one of the following methods: (1) Puncturing the filter anti-drain back valve or the filter dome end and hot-draining; (2) Hot-draining and crushing; (3) Dismantling and hot-draining; or (4) Any other equivalent hot-draining method that will remove used oil.

Enclosed with this letter is an "Environmental Fact Sheet" from the EPA (document number EPA530-F-92-010) regarding the proper management of used oil filters which you may find helpful when determining whether or not a filter has been properly drained. If it is your intent to transport used oil filters that meet the definition of hazardous waste into the United States then the regulations regarding the import of hazardous waste found at 40 C.F.R. §262.60 would be applicable to these types of shipments as would the regulations regarding hazardous waste generators found in Part 262.

As indicated above, the State of Vermont has the authority to regulate used oil filters, therefore, you should contact them for their interpretation of how their standards may apply to your situation. In particular, it would be useful if you could provide to the State specific information which would address the following questions:

1. Are materials other than used-oil filters included in the shipments?
2. Are gasoline filters also included in the shipments as scrap?
3. Can the names and locations of the destination facilities be provided?

The above information should be forwarded to the following:

Peter W. Marshall, Chief  
Management & Prevention Section  
VTDEC Waste Management Division  
103 South Main Street, West Office Building  
Waterbury, VT 05671-0404  
(802) 241-3868  
email: [peterm@dec.anr.state.vt.us](mailto:peterm@dec.anr.state.vt.us)

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Should you have any questions regarding the above please contact Sharon Leitch, of my staff. She may be reached at (617)918-1647.

Sincerely,



Kevin McSweeney, Associate Director of Waste Policy  
Office of Ecosystem Protection

cc: Ken Rota, EPA RCRA Technical Unit  
Jeff Fowley, EPA Office of Regional Council  
Peter Marshall, VTDEC  
John Duclos, NHDES  
Stacy Ladner, MEDEP

enclosure



# Environmental Fact Sheet

## Properly Managing Used Oil Filters

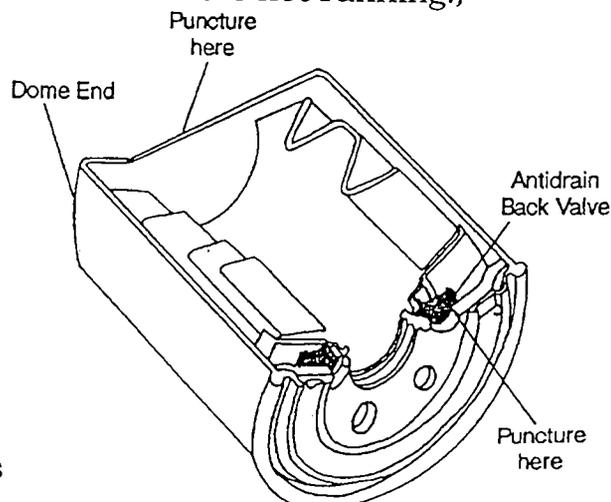
The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) does not regulate used oil that is being recycled or certain types of used oil filters as hazardous waste. Instead, used oil handlers follow a set of federal management standards (40 CFR Part 279) that are designed to encourage the recycling of used oil. EPA also supports the recycling of **properly drained** used oil filters and their parts. Whole filters and their parts contain reusable scrap metal with high BTU content, which makes them recyclable as scrap feed for steel production, for example.

Used oil filters usually can be taken to the same recycling centers that accept used oil. If no local facilities recycle oil filters, drained filters normally can be wrapped in newspaper and disposed of with regular household trash. (Individuals should check with their local trash collection service before discarding filters because some states don't allow used oil filters to be disposed of in landfills.)

Because used oil is a harmful pollutant, all oil should be **drained** from used filters before they are recycled **or** disposed of. Draining the used oil will prevent any leakage into the environment. Follow this checklist to properly drain an oil filter.

- ✓ If necessary, use a filter wrench to loosen the old oil filter. Carefully remove it.
- ✓ The most effective way to drain a filter is to carefully puncture a hole in the dome end of the filter or through the antidrain back valve with a suitable tool, such as a screwdriver. Puncturing the filter breaks the vacuum and allows the "trapped" oil to be recovered for recycling. (Antidrain back valves are contained in most automotive filter models. The valve consists

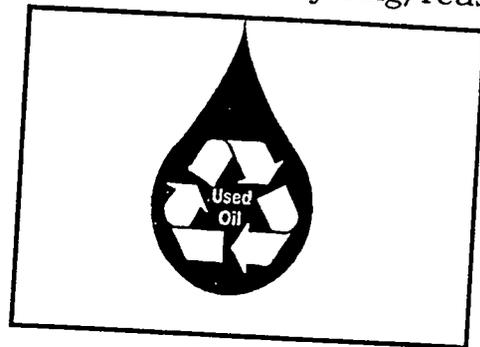
of a rubber flap that creates a vacuum to prevent oil from draining back into the engine when it is not running.)



- ✓ Turn the filter upside down in a used oil collection container, such as a drip pan. Drain as much oil as possible from the filter. For best results, drain used oil filters for a minimum of 12 hours at an approximate temperature of 60°F. (Oil filters also may be drained without puncturing them, and at cooler temperatures. The time required to effectively remove the used oil will take longer than 12 hours.)
- ✓ Use a funnel or carefully pour the used oil from the drip pan into a clean container appropriate for recycling the oil. Don't rinse the residual oil from the container down the drain;

simply reuse the pan when you change your oil or oil filter again.

- ✓ Protect the environment by taking your used oil and the empty oil filter to your nearest public used oil collection center. Look for the "oil drop," which is a petroleum industry symbol indicating that used oil is collected for recycling/reuse.



### Contact

For more information on used oil filters or to find a recycling collection program in your area that accepts used oil filters, call the RCRA Hotline. The Hotline can provide the name, address, and phone number of the person in your state to contact for more information on recycling used oil. The Hotline is open Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. EST. The national, toll-free number is (800) 424-9346; TDD (800) 553-7672 (hearing impaired).

### More Publications

Information on recycling used oil and used oil filters also can be found in the following EPA publications.

**Recycling Used Oil and Used Oil Filters: Tips for Consumers Who Change Their Own Oil**  
(EPA530-F-94-008)

**How to Set Up a Local Program To Recycle Used Oil**  
(EPA530-SW-89-039a)

Write for copies from: RCRA Information Center (RIC), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Solid Waste (5305), 401 M Street SW, Washington, D.C. 20460. Phone orders are accepted by the RCRA Hotline at the above number.