



Waste Fuel, Tanks & Filters

Potential Environmental Impacts

When removed from vehicles, fuel tanks, filters and waste fuel can pollute groundwater supplies and pose a serious fire safety risk if improperly stored. Gasoline has a low flash point (making it flammable) and contains toxic constituents such as benzene.

Legal Requirements

- ◆ Waste gasoline must be managed as a hazardous waste unless it is reused for the purpose it was intended for (as a fuel). [40 CFR 261.2(c)(2)(ii), 261.21, & 261.24] If you do not have an on-site use for your own waste gasoline, it can be picked up and recycled by a firm that can blend your unusable gasoline into a fuel. [List of permitted companies](#).
- ◆ If mixed with hazardous waste (e.g., spent solvents), waste gasoline cannot be reused and must be managed as a hazardous waste. [40 CFR 261.3(a)(2)(iv)] See Appendix A for more information on hazardous waste storage and disposal requirements.
- ◆ Waste diesel fuel is typically not regulated as a hazardous waste, since it is less flammable and contains less of the toxic constituent benzene than gasoline does. [40 CFR 261.24] However, it can be hazardous, especially if mixed with gasoline or other hazardous wastes. [40 CFR 261.3(a)(2)(iv)] The only way to know for sure is to have it tested. As with gasoline, diesel fuel that can be reused on-site or sent for fuel blending is not subject to hazardous regulations.
- ◆ Fuels that are hazardous waste and that are going to be disposed of must be stored in closed containers or tanks that are managed in accordance with hazardous waste requirements. [40 CFR 262.34(a), (c), & (d); RCRA Sections 22a-449(c)-102(a)(2)] See Appendix A.
- ◆ Old vehicle fuel tanks that are empty must be recycled as scrap metal or can be disposed of in the trash if made of plastic [40 CFR 261.7]. The tanks are considered empty if they have been drained of all material that can be removed from the tank by normal methods like pouring or pumping, AND no more than one inch (or 3% by weight of residue remains in the tank). If an old vehicle fuel tank is not empty, then the excess fuel must be drained and managed in accordance to the requirements listed above. [40 CFR 262.11; RCRA Section 22a-449(c)-102(a)(2)(A)].
- ◆ Underground fuel storage tanks are subject to special requirements. See the Petroleum Storage Tanks fact sheet for information on the proper management of these tanks.

- ◆ Fuel filters, even when properly drained, cannot be discarded in the trash since they may be hazardous due to benzene in the gasoline or toxic metals in the filter casing. [40 CFR 261.24] However, if metal fuel filters are drained of all free liquid and are recycled as scrap metal, they are exempt from the hazardous waste regulations. [40 CFR 261.6(a)(3)(ii)]

Legal References

- Identification and listing of Hazardous Waste
 - [40 CFR 261.2\(c\)\(2\)\(ii\), 261.21, & 261.24](#)
 - [40 CFR 261.3\(a\)\(2\)\(iv\)](#)
 - [40 CFR 262.34\(a\), \(c\), & \(d\)](#)
 - [40 CFR 262.11](#)
 - [40 CFR 261.6\(a\)\(3\)\(ii\)](#)
 - [40 CFR 261.7](#)
- Standards Applicable to Generators of Hazardous Waste
 - [RCSA Sections 22a-449\(c\)-102](#)

For more information, call DEEP's Waste Engineering and Enforcement Division at 888-424-4193.

Best Management Practices

- ★ Use an air-driven pump or a fuel tank drilling machine to drain the remaining fuel from a tank into a properly labeled storage container.
- ★ Re-use or recycle the fuel drained from tanks.
- ★ Metal tanks will be accepted by most scrap recyclers if the tanks have been crushed, cut up, or have holes in them.
- ★ Store used tanks on a covered impermeable surface away from ignition sources like heat or sparks.
- ★ Store gasoline or diesel fuel that is to be reused on-site in closed containers that are clearly labeled.
- ★ Do not mix waste gasoline or diesel fuel with other wastes, since this can complicate testing and disposal, and make it difficult or impossible to reuse or recycle it as a fuel.



Removing gasoline with a tank drilling machine

Pollution Prevention Checklist

- ✓ Do you use an air-driven pump or a tank drilling machine to siphon fuel from tanks, helping to eliminate spills?
 - ✓ Do you re-use fuel drained from tanks for your vehicles or equipment?
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Did You Know?

Sending your waste gasoline for recycling (fuel blending) rather than for disposal may reduce your monthly hazardous waste totals and can eliminate the regulations that you are required to comply with by reducing your hazardous waste generator status.

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