



Partnership for the Environment

Utah Department of Environmental Quality

Junkyard Fact Sheet

What Are The Potential Hazards?

Junkyard businesses buy or accept discarded, wrecked and abandoned automobiles, trucks, buses and trailers. Generally, junk vehicles remain in the junkyard for a specified time period (6 months - 1 year) during which all useful parts are removed and offered for sale. Junk vehicles may also be sold intact. Vehicles that remain in the lot for a long period of time are usually crushed and sent to a scrap metal facility.

Some junkyard operators collect brake and transmission fluids, antifreeze, batteries, gasoline and motor oil from the junk vehicles. Waste fluids are generally stored on-site in 55 gallon drums or in tanks. Uncontaminated gasoline may be stored for use by junkyard forklifts and other machinery. Usable batteries are stored and offered for sale; unusable batteries are collected and stored. Storage areas for waste fluids are a potential threat to ground water quality.

Best Management Practices

- Do not mix any hazardous waste with anything, e.g., kerosene or gasoline.
- Store solvents and degreasers in tightly covered containers.
- Batteries should be kept intact. To avoid leakage, batteries should be stored on pallets, banded and protected from the elements and unauthorized handling. Batteries that do not leak are not a hazardous waste and can be transported as a hazardous material to a reclaimer.
- Oil contaminated soil must be handled as a hazardous waste.
- Although antifreeze is not listed as a hazardous waste, it can contaminate ground water. Antifreeze should be shipped with a hazardous waste transporter as a "non-hazardous" waste or taken to a hazardous waste facility. Antifreeze should not be disposed in a landfill or septic system.
- Wastes should be stored in 55 gallon drums or other leakproof containers. Drums and containers should be fitted with secure lids to prevent spills, leaks and the introduction of precipitation.
- Outdoor storage facilities should have a permanent roof to prevent precipitation and sunlight from entering the storage area.
- Rags contaminated with paint, solvents, grease or oil should be sent to a rag rental/recycling facility.