Used Oil: Disposing and Burning Regulations

Used oil, filters, and used oil-contaminated sorbent materials often contain hazardous contaminants, such as flammable fuels and their additives, lead and other toxic materials. Used oil that is disposed of improperly can kill vegetation and wildlife and pollute surface and drinking water. For this reason, it is illegal to pour used oil on the ground, pour it down a drain or sewer, put it in the trash, or apply it to roads for dust suppression.

With temperatures dropping and heating costs rising, you may consider burning used oil as a disposal method to save some money. Before you start burning, there are a few things that your business should consider. Used oil burners are regulated by the MPCA and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Used oil burners must burn ‘on-specification’ used oil. On-specification oil meets testing requirements that ensure nothing has been added that will hurt the environment when burned. On-specification oil must meet requirements in six categories: flash point, arsenic, cadmium, chromium, lead, and total halogens. If it fails in any one of these categories it is called off-specification used oil, and must meet further requirements for burning. Solvents are the only substances that may be added to oil, used oil, and must meet further requirements for burning. Solvents are the only substances that may be added to oil, (Used Oil Continued on page 3)

Reducing Emissions from Diesel Exhaust

Diesel fuel runs our economy. Used in trucks, trains, boats, buses, and off-road equipment, diesel is a popular fuel because of its efficiency, durability, and power.

As important as it is in our daily lives, diesel can have a negative impact on our air quality. Exhaust from diesel combustion produces particulates, nitrogen oxides (NOx), and volatile organic compounds (VOC). When NOx and VOCs combine, they form ground level ozone which is a component of smog.

Steps are being taken to help reduce air pollutants from diesel emissions. This fall, retailers will be required to provide Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel (ULSD) fuel which reduces sulfur content by 97 percent. This reduction in sulfur will allow pollution-control technology to be installed on heavy-duty highway engines helping them meet more stringent emission standards beginning in model year 2007. (Diesel Continued on page 3)
It’s not your Grandfather’s Woodstove

Woodstove manufacturers have improved combustion technologies over the last 18 years. Newer woodstoves burn cleaner and more efficiently than older stoves.

In 1988, an EPA regulation established limits for particulate emissions from woodstoves. All woodstoves sold in the U.S. must now meet these limits as they apply to non-catalytic and catalytic stoves. EPA must certify that a woodstove meets the applicable limit.

An EPA-certified stove emits far less particle pollution—70 percent less on average—than an older, less-efficient stove. Emissions of fine particles (with diameters less than 2.5 microns) are 30 to 50 grams/hour for an old, non-certified stove and only 2-7 grams/hour for an EPA-certified stove. The overall efficiency (for combustion and heat transfer) is 40 to 60 percent for an old non-certified stove. EPA-certified stoves have a better overall efficiency of 60-80 percent. EPA-certified stoves also use approximately 30 percent less wood than older stoves.

For more information about burning clean, go to www.epa.gov/woodstoves.

—Phyllis Strong

Burning Seed Corn in Stoves

Summer is officially over and you may be starting to consider heating options for the approaching notorious Minnesota winter. One option you may be considering is burning seed corn or other grains in indoor heating units (like corn-burning stoves, etc.). Initially, it may seem like a cheap alternative fuel, but burning waste seed corn in a corn-burning stove is not allowed in Minnesota.

Pesticides (Captan, Poncho, Lorsban, Maxim XL, etc.) are commonly present on seed corn. When pesticide-treated seed corn is heated (especially at low temperatures, such as in startup and shutdown operations) it can give off harmful fumes such as hydrochloric acid and thiophosgene (mustard) gas.

Seed corn becomes solid waste once it is no longer used for its intended purpose: planting corn. To burn seed corn would be burning solid waste. This would make the corn burning stove a solid waste combustor. Small onsite waste combustor units are banned in Minnesota (Minn. Rule 7011.1220). Therefore burning seed corn in these units is illegal.

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture and Department of Health will be releasing more information on this topic soon. Contact the Small Business Environmental Assistance Program to receive a copy of this information once it becomes available.

—Kim Grosenheider

Increase your fuel efficiency

EPA’s Green Vehicle Guide
Use this guide to choose the cleanest and most fuel-efficient vehicle that meets your needs.
www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/index.htm

Gas mileage tips
www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/drive.shtml

Alternative Fuels

E85
For information on E85 vehicles, station locations, prices
www.cleanairchoice.org

Bio Diesel
Station locations
www.biodiesel.org/buyingbiodiesel/retailfuelsites/

Resources

Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP)
(800)657-3938 or (651)282-6143
www.pca.state.mn.us/programs/sbap_p.html

Small Business Ombudsman
(800)985-4247 or (651)297-8615
www.pca.state.mn.us/programs/sbomb_p.html
Testing Used Oil

If your company wants to accept used oil from other businesses, there are additional measures to be taken. A company supplying used oil must have an EPA identification number if it properly tested its own oil. If you are testing your own oil (or oil received from another source) you will have to notify the EPA that you are an ‘on-specification used oil burner’ and obtain an EPA identification number. If an oil source has not tested its oil, you are required to do a one-time test before you burn, and keep these results for three years.

Burn Requirements

There are specific requirements your company needs to follow in order to burn used oil. First, you need a used oil burner built for oil burning. The furnace must be rated to less than 500,000 BTUs per hour and be vented to the outdoors. Take into account state of Minnesota building codes for installation and use of used oil burners.

If you have an Option B Air Emission Permit and you add a used oil heater, you might need a different permit. Call the Small Business Environmental Assistance Program for assistance.

Once all of these requirements have been met, you should feel confident that burning used oil is acceptable. If you have any further questions do not hesitate to call the MPCA or your county.

The MPCA has a fact sheet with more detail about burning used oil at its Web site www.pca.state.mn.us/publications/w-hw4-32.pdf.

—Kit Grayson & Melissa Wenzel

Sources of Used Oil

“Used oil” can be many different things: engine oil, transmission fluid, gear oil, brake fluid, transformer fluid, and hydraulic oil. Antifreeze, fuels, and solvents are not considered used oil.

One of the main sources of used oil may be your own business if you perform oil changes or repair your own machines. Individuals who change their own engine oil provide another acceptable source. It is a good practice to have them sign a sheet when they drop off used oil to hold them accountable for the purity of the oil. This way, you don’t have unacceptable fluids contaminating your used oil supply.

However, these changes will not apply to engines currently on the road. For these, other approaches can be taken to reduce emissions. One of these measures is installing a diesel oxidation catalyst (DOC) or diesel particulate filter (DPF) to the exhaust system of the vehicle. Both remove particulates from diesel exhaust. The DOC works by oxidizing the pollutants and removing 10-50 percent of particulates. The DPF physically traps and oxidizes particulate matter, reducing it by more than 85 percent. Although more efficient, the DPF is more expensive and requires the use of ULSD.

Another option for long-haul truck drivers is installing an idle-reduction device known as an auxiliary power unit (APU). Many states, counties, and cities are implementing anti-idling laws. This smaller, EPA-certified engine, can be used instead of the larger truck engine when the driver wants to idle a vehicle. Instead of burning over 1 gallon of diesel every hour to make the cab comfortable during mandated resting periods, these smaller units burn 1/10 the amount. This results in a savings of emissions, in addition to a savings in the pocketbook from reduced fuel costs.

For many small businesses, although the purchase of equipment will result in financial savings from reduced fuel usage, having the initial capital to purchase the equipment can be a challenge. The Small Business Environmental Improvement Loan Program has been awarding low-interest loans to truck drivers to help in this effort. These loans are available to small businesses with fewer than 50 full-time employees. To date, over 20 loans have been issued to help in the purchase of these APU units.

For additional information on the loan program, contact Mike Nelson, Small Business Ombudsman, (651) 297-8615 or go to www.pca.state.mn.us/programs/sbomb_loan.html.

—Mike Nelson
Reminder of the New Hazardous Waste Manifest

As of September 5, all shipments of hazardous material must use the new federal uniform manifest form. The uniform manifest form is available from EPA registered printers and distributors at www.epa.gov/epaoswer/hazwaste/gener/manifest/registry/printers.htm.

The procedure for submitting manifest copies to the Minnesota regulatory agency can be found in the guidance document “Step 7: Manifest Shipments of Hazardous Waste” at www.pca.state.mn.us/publications/w-hw1-07.pdf. Check out a future Enterprise for results of MN rule changes to the manifest process.

—Kim Grosenheider

Small Business Resource Fair in Moorhead

Aspiring entrepreneurs and business owners are invited to the Moorhead-Fargo Small Business Resource Fair on Monday, October 16, 2006. It will be held from 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM at Minnesota State University Moorhead, The Center for Business, Moorhead, Minnesota.

You can discuss your needs with over 20 exhibitors providing business assistance, such as: Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry, Minnesota Business Finance Corporation, Small Business Administration, Minnesota Small Business Development Centers, North Dakota Small Business Development Centers, The SCORE Association, U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development, private lenders, Minnesota State University Moorhead, and the Small Business Environmental Assistance Program.

Workshops held throughout the day are focused on helping businesses be more effective and profitable:

- Business Basics,
- Marketing Essentials,
- Financing Your Business,
- Customer Service Elements,
- Resources Available to Small Businesses,
- Employee Retirement Savings Plans Considerations, and
- many more!

For a complete list of workshops and exhibitors or to register your attendance visit: www.mnsbdc.com

The Small Business Resource Fair is sponsored by The Minnesota and North Dakota offices of the SCORE Association, the Small Business Administration, the Minnesota Small Business Development Centers and North Dakota Small Business Development Centers and Minnesota State University Moorhead.

Green Power is supplied from renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar power, geothermal, hydropower, and various forms of biomass. To find out how you can use green power, contact your utility company or go to:

www.moea.state.mn.us/energy/greenpower.cfm