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Used Oil Fact Sheet # 10

USED OIL FROM BOATS, SHIPS, AND OTHER WATERCRAFT

This fact sheet provides information about the proper disposal of used oil generated by:

- private boat owners;
- marinas and other commercial docking facilities;
- boat maintenance and repair facilities;
- commercial boat owners (i.e., cargo and ferry lines, and commercial fishermen); and,
- military facilities (i.e., U.S. Navy and Coast Guard facilities).

Please note that this fact sheet is intended only as a helpful compliance aid. It is not intended to supersede the applicable regulations.¹ It is always the responsibility of persons involved in the management of used oil to comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

What Types of Used Oils Are Addressed by This Fact Sheet?

Examples of used oil that may be generated from boats, ships, and other watercraft include:

- used crankcase (engine) oil;
- used liquid and semi-solid gear, chain, and ball bearing lubricants; and,
- used hydraulic fluid.

On-board air conditioning systems may also generate used oils that are contaminated with refrigerants (such as Freon). However, certain special requirements apply to this kind of used oil (in particular, it must be recycled for its Freon content). Materials that contain or are contaminated with used oil can also fall under the definition of used oil. The most common of these materials are used oil engine filters, rags and wipers, and absorbents (such as kitty litter, speedi-dri, and absorbent pigs). Another waste stream that can often contain used oil is bilge water. However, if the used oil is removed from these materials so that no visible free-flowing oil remains in them, they do not have to be managed as used oil any longer (unless they are burned for energy recovery, in which case they remain subject to used oil requirements). If properly de-oiled, tested, and found to be non-hazardous, these materials can be disposed of at a facility permitted by DEP to accept such wastes.

¹ The requirements which currently apply to the management of used oil in Connecticut may be found in Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies ("RCSA") Section 22a-449(c)-119. This RCSA Section incorporates the 2000 federal used oil regulations at 40 CFR 279, and includes a number of additional, Connecticut-only provisions. Used oils are also subject to the requirements of Connecticut General Statutes ("CGS") Section 22-454 with respect to persons engaged in the business of collecting, storing, treating, or disposing of used oil.

The following types of materials are NOT classified as used oils, and are not addressed by this fact sheet:

- antifreeze;
- waste gasoline, diesel or other fuels; and
- virgin fuel oils (however, virgin lubricating oils and other non-fuel virgin oils that are discarded are regulated as used oil).

In addition, this fact sheet does not cover hazardous wastes, such as boat painting wastes. DEP has other fact sheets and guidance on these wastes – visit the DEP website (www.ct.gov/dep), or call DEP at one of the phone numbers listed at the top of this fact sheet for more information.

Are There Special Rules for Used Oil Generated by Private Boat Owners?

Used oil that is generated by private boat owners is not subject to the same requirements as used oil generated from commercial boat maintenance operations. Instead, private boat owners that do work on their own boats are classified as household “Do-It-Yourselfers” (just like those who do routine maintenance on their own cars, trucks, or other vehicles). The used oil generated by such do-it-yourselfers is exempt from DEP’s used oil rules, as long as it is properly disposed of. This means taking the used oil to an authorized Do-It-Yourselfer used oil collection center. Some marinas may accept Do-It-Yourselfer used oil, and most towns in Connecticut will accept this type of used oil at their local transfer station or recycling facility. Many towns also collect used oil filters and antifreeze at these facilities. In addition, many towns offer separate collections for household hazardous waste. For information on the services available in your area, call your town or city hall for details.

Regardless of which of the above is used, Do-It-Yourselfers should be sure that they:

- Do NOT mix used oil with antifreeze or hazardous waste.
- Do NOT burn used oil in residential boilers or space heaters.
- Do NOT dump used oil overboard.
- Do NOT pour used oil into sewers or storm drains.
- Do NOT dump used oil on the ground, use it for weed control, or to keep dust down.

The above activities can cause pollution of air, water, or soil, and may constitute serious violations of state or federal laws.

What Rules Apply to Do-It-Yourselfer Used Oil Collection Centers?

As indicated above, generators of Do-It-Yourselfer used oil are not subject to DEP’s used oil regulations. However, this exemption ends once the used oil is taken to a Do-It-Yourselfer used oil collection center. As a result, the collection center is fully subject to DEP’s used oil rules. This means that the collection center is responsible for properly testing the oil, and documenting that it has not been mixed with hazardous waste. The collection center must also ensure that the oil is sent to a permitted used oil recycling facility, and that it is shipped via transporters that are permitted by DEP to haul used oil. The collection center must also ensure that the used oil is properly stored in containers or tanks. In addition, collection centers are also subject to certain permitting requirements. To find out how to get more information about the proper management of Do-It-Yourselfer used oil, please see the last section of this fact sheet.

What Requirements Apply to Commercially Generated Used Oils?

Unlike Do-It-Yourselfer used oil, used oil which is generated from either:

- (1) the maintenance of commercial boats, or
- (2) the maintenance of private boats at commercial boat maintenance or repair facilities,

is fully subject to DEP's used oil regulations. Generators of such oils must test their used oil, document that it has not been mixed with hazardous waste, and properly store it while it is on-site. Commercial haulers of such used oil must be permitted to transport used oil in Connecticut. Facilities that are in the business of storing or treating used oil are also required to have permits from DEP. To find out how to get more information about the proper management of commercially-generated used oil, please see the last section of this fact sheet.

How Do Used Oil Rules Apply When a Vessel Is at a Dock or Port Facility?

Commercially-generated used oils that are generated on board boats, ships and other watercraft become subject to DEP's used oil regulations at the time that the used oil is actually transferred ashore. Depending on the relationship between the owner/operator of the vessel and the dock or port facility at which used oil is being off-loaded, the used oil regulations may apply differently, as outlined in the following four examples:

- (1) The owner/operator of the vessel is the same as the owner/operator of the facility receiving and storing the used oil. In this case, the dock or port facility is simply acting as a generator of used oil, and is not required to have a permit to transfer this used oil ashore or store it prior to shipping it off-site for proper disposal.
- (2) The owner/operator of the vessel is different from the owner/operator of the facility receiving and storing the used oil. In this case, the dock or port facility is acting as a used oil transfer or storage facility, and may be required to have a permit from DEP for this activity. The facility must also comply with the applicable used oil transfer or storage facility regulations.
- (3) The owner/operator of the vessel is different from the owner/operator of the facility, but the used oil is generated as the result of maintenance performed by the facility. In this case, the used oil is not generated while the vessel is out in open water, but as part of maintenance activities performed by the port or dock facility. In this case, the owner/operator of the vessel and the port or dock facility are considered "co-generators" of the used oil. Although the port or dock facility usually assumes this responsibility for compliance with the generator requirements for this used oil, both are considered equally responsible for ensuring that the used oil is properly managed and disposed of.
- (4) The oil is not stored at the port or dock facility, but is transferred to waiting vehicles and immediately shipped off-site for proper disposal. In this case, the owner/operator of the vessel is considered the sole generator of the used oil. The owner/operator of the transport vehicle that the used oil is transferred to is regulated as a used oil transporter. The port or dock facility is not a used oil generator, transporter, transfer or storage facility, and is not subject to DEP's used oil regulations.

May Used Oil Be Mixed with Diesel Fuel, as Recommended by the Manufacturers of Some Diesel Engines?

The manufacturers of certain diesel engines recommend that you add used oil to your diesel fuel. If you have a diesel engine of this type, you may mix your used oil with virgin diesel fuel according to the manufacturer's instructions. However, up until the point that the used oil is actually mixed with the diesel fuel, it must be handled exactly the same as any other used oil.

Please note that this exemption applies only to your used oil and only if it is used in your own diesel engines. You may not accept used oil from someone else to put into your diesel fuel. You may also not offer your used oil to others to add to their diesel fuel.

Are There Any Other Requirements I Should Know About?

In addition to the disposal requirements outlined above, there are a number of other laws and regulations that can apply to used oil. Most importantly, spills of used oil (or any other petroleum liquids, chemicals, or hazardous waste) must immediately be reported via DEP's 24-hour spill reporting number: (860) 424-3338. In addition, certain facilities may be subject to DEP's underground storage tank regulations, or may require permits from DEP's Water Management Bureau. And, lastly, some vessels may be subject to MARPOL 73/78, an international agreement that is designed to prevent marine pollution. If you are interested in obtaining more information on any of these issues, please refer to the next section for details.

How May I Get More Information on Used Oil?

DEP has a number of other helpful documents on used oil, which are available on the DEP website (www.ct.gov/dep), or by contacting DEP at the address/telephone numbers listed at the beginning of this fact sheet. For more information on Do-It-Yourselfer used oil, see DEP's Used Oil # 9 – "Management of Household Do-It-Yourselfer Used Oil." For more information on the proper management of commercially-generated used oil, see DEP's Used Oil Supplemental Fact Sheet # 7 – "Used Oil Generated From Motor Vehicle Servicing Operations." Even more information is available in a detailed guidance document from DEP entitled Management of Used Oil in Connecticut. Persons with questions may also call or write DEP directly for assistance.

In addition, DEP's Office of Long Island Sound Programs (OLISP) has produced an outreach program specifically for marinas, to assist them in complying with the various environmental requirements that apply to them. Called the Clean Marina Program, the program is described in detail on the clean marina web page on DEP's web site (www.ct.gov/dep). In particular, see the link on that page to the Clean Marina Guide, a comprehensive guidance document developed especially for marinas.

The Department of Environmental Protection is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, and its programs and services are offered without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, or disability. In conformance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the DEP makes every effort to provide equally effective services for persons with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities needing auxiliary aids or services for effective communication should call (860) 424-3035 or TDD (860) 424-3333.