



Fact Sheet

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania • Department of Environmental Protection • <http://www.dep.state.pa.us>

BUREAU OF LAND RECYCLING & WASTE MANAGEMENT • DIVISION OF WASTE MINIMIZATION & PLANNING (#18)



RECYCLE USED OIL FILTERS

TIPS

FOR MANAGING AUTOMOTIVE FILTERS

1. **Terne** is an alloy of tin and lead. Because unused **terne-plated** oil filters exhibit the toxicity characteristic for lead, Pennsylvania requires that used **terne-plated** oil filters be managed as **hazardous wastes**.
2. “**Hot-drained**” means draining the oil filters at temperatures near the **operating temperature of the engine**, not draining at room temperature.
3. A **minimum of 12 hours** draining time is required for proper hot-draining.
4. Filters that immediately drip oil when picked up are not considered drained.
5. **Fuel filters** are considered **hazardous waste** and must be managed accordingly.

Pennsylvanians purchased more than 15 million light-duty oil filters in 1994.¹ After use, an estimated 90 percent are landfilled. Waste filters are potentially hazardous, however, and require special handling.

Used oil filter managers should make every effort to recycle used filters. For each million filters recycled, the following materials can be recovered:

- * **Steel**—425 tons,
- * **Used oil**—12,750 gallons,

¹“Estimated Light Duty Oil Filter Sales by State,” published by the Filter Manufacturers Council, a group concerned about proper management of filters manufactured in the United States.

- * **Filter paper medium**, which is saturated with oil, can be reused as a high Btu fuel in approved industrial kilns and boiler operations.

Handlers of used filters should be aware of mandatory state requirements for proper filter management. For example, even though nonterne-plated, fully drained used oil filters are excluded from the definition of hazardous waste, they must be managed according to Commonwealth regulations. DEP’s hazardous waste management regulations provide an exclusion for used oil filters:

1. “Nonterne-plated used oil filters that are not mixed with waste listed in (Subchapter D) of this (Chapter) if these oil filters have been gravity hot-drained using one of the following methods:
 - (i) Puncturing the filter anti-drain back valve or the filter dome end and hot-draining;
 - (ii) Hot-draining and crushing;
 - (iii) Dismantling and hot-draining; or
 - (iv) Any other equivalent hot-draining method that will remove used oil.”

*Reference: Section 261.4(23), No. 189 Aug. 90
effective as of May 22, 1992*

For more information, contact the Used Oil Information Center in Harrisburg at (717) 783-6004, or visit DEP’s website:

www.dep.state.pa.us

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