



**MANAGEMENT OF USED OIL COLLECTION CENTERS**  
NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
DIVISION OF WASTE MANAGEMENT  
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The North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality recognizes the potential hazards to human health and the environment from the indiscriminate dumping and mismanagement of used oil. Many communities decided to start collecting used oil to prevent disposal in the landfill, storm drains or the environment. The Division of Waste Management prepared this management outline for Used Oil Collection Centers to assist communities and businesses starting a used oil collection center.

**What is a Used Oil Collection Center?** A used oil collection center is defined as any site or facility that is authorized to manage used oil and accepts, aggregates, and/or stores used oil collected from used oil generators. Used oil collection centers are required to comply with the used oil generator standards and be registered, licensed, permitted, and recognized by the state, county, and municipal government to manage used oil. There are two types of used oil collection standards: do-it-yourselfer (DIY) used oil collection centers and used oil collection centers.

**What is Used Oil?** “Used oil” is defined as any oil that has been refined from crude oil or any synthetic oil that has been used and, as a result of such use, is contaminated by physical or chemical impurities. This means that to be considered as used oil, three criteria must be met:

1. The oil has been refined from crude oil or is of synthetic stock;
2. The oil has been used for its intended purpose, for example, as a lubricant, coolant, or as an emulsion—other uses may apply to this rule; and
3. The oil is contaminated by physical or chemical impurities.

Collection centers may accept used oil from DIYs or other used oil generators. Materials that are acceptable as used oil include, but are not limited to:

- Used crankcase oil
- Used grease
- Used cutting oil
- Used hydraulic fluids
- Used quenching oil
- Used gear oil
- Used machining oil
- Used transmission fluid

**What is not Used Oil?** There are a couple categories of waste that are not used oil, even though they contain used oil or appear oily. The two major categories are waste oil and oily waste. These are defined below and have very different management characteristics.

“Waste oil” is oil that has not been used for its intended purpose. Waste oil includes tank bottom clean-outs, virgin oil spill materials, and commercial oil products (i.e., gasoline, lubricants, etc.) which have not been used for their intended purpose. Some of these can be managed with your used oil, while others may not. Contact the Division of Waste Management for assistance on the proper management of waste oil.

“Oily waste” is solid waste that has come into contact with either used oil or waste oil. Oily waste includes, but is not limited to used virgin oil containers, oil soaked shop towels and rags, and spent oil

sorbent material. These wastes cannot be managed as used oil and may require prior management before disposal. Contact the Division of Waste Management for assistance on the proper management of oily waste.

Materials that are not acceptable as used oil include, but are not limited to:

- Used oil mixed with hazardous waste
- Some waste oils
- Used oil containing PCBs
- Oily wastes

**Collection Center Requirements.** Both DIY and used oil collection centers must comply with the following regulations, unless otherwise noted.

*Used Oil Storage Requirements.*

1. **Storage Units.** Used oil must be stored in tanks or containers which are in good condition. If used oil is stored in an underground storage tank, the tank must also comply with additional regulations for underground storage tanks. Used oil is prohibited from being stored in surface impoundments.
2. **Condition of Units.** Storage units must be free of severe rust, no apparent structural defects or deterioration, and must not be visibly leaking. To inspect the condition of storage units, small storage units must be elevated above ground level. An example would be storing 55-gallon drums on a pallet. Tanks should be located inside secondary containment structures.

Secondary containment of used oil is strongly encouraged. If a collection center conducts other used oil activities, such as processing and marketing or acts as a transfer station, secondary containment is required. An example of secondary containment for the storage area is an impervious floor covering, such as plastic- or epoxy-coated concrete with a dike, berm or retaining wall. Secondary containment structures should also be equipped with a sump to collect spills or overfills and to remove precipitation.

3. **Marking and Labeling.** Aboveground tanks and containers must be labeled with the words "used oil." The fill pipes for underground tanks used for the storage of used oil must be labeled with the words "used oil." This marking must be distinct and legible. The labeling requirements are meant to assist the collection center's employees in identifying all storage units which contain used oil and to prevent unintentional mixing of used oil and other materials.
4. **Response to Releases.** Response to a release of used oil should occur immediately upon discovery of the spill. Response actions should include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a. **Stopping the release:** Turn off the valve, upright an overturned drum, etc.
  - b. **Containing the release:** Dike around a leaking drum or tank, overpack a leaking drum, close off or cover a floor drain, etc.
  - c. **Cleanup and proper management of the released used oil and other materials:** Scoop up contaminated material and place in a disposal container, suction leaked oil from sumps or secondary containment, etc.
  - d. **Prevent future releases:** Repair or replacement of leaking storage containers, tanks, valves, fittings, etc., prior to returning them to service.

Collection centers are responsible for spills that go beyond the facility boundary. If releases of used oil enter or have the potential to enter into any surface water, you must notify the Division of Water Quality at 701.328.5210.

*Off-site Shipments of Used Oil.*

1. Self-transport of Used Oil. Used oil collection generators may transport up to 55 gallons of used oil in their own vehicles to a collection center.
2. Using a Transporter. Used oil collection centers using a commercial transporter must ensure that the transporter has an EPA identification number and a current North Dakota solid waste transporter permit.
3. Records of Shipments. Collection centers are not required to keep records of shipments unless the collection center conducts other used oil activities, such as marketing, and processing or acts as a transfer station. The Department encourages record keeping of the date and amount of used oil shipped, the transporter, and the end destination in order to manage any future liability.

*Mixing of other wastes with used oil.* The regulations state that used oil containing 1,000 parts per million (ppm) or more total halogens is presumed to be mixed with regulated hazardous wastes. Conditionally exempt small quantity generators of hazardous waste may manage these wastes by mixing them with their used oil. A collection center may also rebut the presumption if they can document that no hazardous wastes have been mixed with the used oil.

The problem most used oil collection centers encounter is used antifreeze. Because antifreeze is mixed with water, it partitions in the container. Used oil jobbers normally suction used oil into their collection vehicle and do not take the used antifreeze. The Department recommends that used oil collection centers tightly control access to the collection container to reduce the possibility of uncontrolled dumping and unauthorized disposal of other wastes.

*Notification.* Used oil collection centers are required to notify the Department of their used oil activities. To meet the requirements, a used oil collection center can submit a Notification of Regulated Waste Activity form, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) form 8700-12, or can submit a written notification that contains the name of the facility, location, and used oil activities being conducted. An EPA identification number will then be issued to the collection center site.

DIY collection centers do not need to submit this notification. However, all collection centers should consider other notification requirements, such as contacting the local fire department to check applicable fire and safety codes, insurance companies, local generators, etc.

**Storage Limits.** Currently, there are no storage limits on the amount accumulated onsite or for the length of time that the used oil is accumulated. Check with local fire departments for applicable codes concerning accumulation limits. Collection centers are not subject to the spill prevention, control, and countermeasures plan requirements of the Oil Pollution Act if aboveground storage does not exceed 1,320 total gallons and no single container has a capacity over 660 gallons. If you have questions about spill control and countermeasure plans, contact the Division of Water Quality at 701.328.5210.