



Automobile Salvage Yards Pollution Prevention Fact Sheet

Utah Department of Environmental Quality
Promoting a Healthy Environment

The auto salvage business is one of the best examples of recycle / reuse. The dismantling of vehicles for reusable parts and fluids and the sale of remaining materials as scrap has gone a long way toward lessening the burden on our landfills. Unfortunately, the methods used in dismantling and storage can, and often have resulted in serious, negative impacts on the environment.

As environmental regulations tighten and as the public becomes more environmentally aware, pressure will mount on the salvage business to “cleanup their act.” Perception of the salvage business as harmful to the environment stems from mental images of junk yards with tires piled high and auto carcasses rusting away.

Changing this image will require the auto salvage industry to examine itself and take appropriate, feasible steps toward protecting the environment. This will not only have positive effects on the environment, but will help transform the negative image into something more positive. Additionally, it may help in complying with environmental regulations and may even increase property marketability. Selling a contaminated site will probably be impossible.

The following information not only presents an approach for a model auto salvage yard, but also some realistic steps which can be taken to clean up an existing facility.

Fluids Handling

Proper removal and handling of automobile fluids should be the first step taken. Fluids associated with auto salvage include:

- Drained motor oil
- Antifreeze
- Hydraulic oil/fluid
- Transmission fluid
- Brake fluid
- Window cleaner
- Oil recovered from steam cleaning
- Water recovered from steam cleaning
- Storm water run off from storage area

Drained Motor Oil: An accepted practice is to allow oil to remain in the engine. It and the associated filters are sold with the engine. However, this is not true of all salvage yards. Used motor oil can be stored and sold to a processor or rerefiner or used as a fuel or energy source. For rules and regulations regarding used oil contact the Used Oil Section, Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste, State of Utah. The Used Oil Hotline can be reached at 1-800-458-0145. A list of used oil

transporters is also available.

Antifreeze:

Most salvaged vehicles have antifreeze in their systems. Due to heavy metal accumulation in the antifreeze and chemical makeup of antifreeze (ethylene-glycol), it is not recommended to use the sewer for disposal.

Reclamation and reuse of antifreeze is recommended. A firm in Salt Lake City recycles used antifreeze and will accept it for free or pick it up for a small fee.

*Other Vehicle
Fluids:*

Brake fluid, transmission fluid, hydraulic oils, etc. are not considered financially feasible for recovery. Because of contamination or chemical compounds these fluids should be disposed of as a hazardous waste.

*Wastewater
and
Storm Runoff:*

Steam cleaning of engines and parts results in oil-laden wastewater. This water should be segregated from domestic type wastewater. This wastewater should be given time to allow for solids settlement. If possible, the used oil should be separated for recycling and collected by a permitted used oil transporter. Disposal of the remaining sludge must be handled as a hazardous waste.

*Other Recyclable
Materials:*

Other materials that can be recycled and are associated with salvage yards include:

- Lead Acid Batteries (State law prohibits disposal in a landfill)
- Radiators, Engines, Air Conditioning Coils, Catalytic Converters
- Scrap Metals and Plastic
- Rubber Related Materials

All of these materials are recyclable and whenever possible, they should be recycled instead of being disposed of in landfills. Recyclers of these materials can be found in the yellow pages of your telephone book under "Recycling", or by calling the Salt Lake Valley Recycling Information Hot Line at 1-801-974-6902.

For More Information, Contact:

Department of Environmental Quality at 1-801-536-4400
Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste at 1-801- 538-6170
Pollution Prevention Coordinator at 1-801-536-4477