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## *Used Oil Fact Sheet # 11*

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# USED OIL GENERATED ON FARMS

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This fact sheet was written to provide information about the proper disposal of used oil generated from agricultural operations, including dairy, beef, poultry, and other livestock farms, fruit and vegetable growers, orchards and nurseries, maple syrup and honey producers, and other types of farming operations. All of these types of facilities are likely to have a variety of machinery and equipment that may generate used oil during routine servicing or maintenance.

This fact sheet is intended only as a helpful compliance aid. It is not intended to supersede the applicable regulations. It is always the responsibility of persons involved in the management of used oil to comply with all applicable laws and regulations.<sup>1</sup>

### **Why Is It Important to Properly Dispose of Used Oil?**

Just one quart of used oil can make millions of gallons of drinking water unfit to drink. Since *millions* of gallons of used oil are generated in Connecticut each year, it is easy to see just how much of a threat to our drinking water supplies improperly disposed of used oil can be. Used oil that is improperly disposed of can also kill trees and other plants, harm fish and wildlife, and pollute rivers, streams, and wetlands.

### **What Types of Used Oil May Be Generated on Farms?**

Examples of types of used oil that may be generated on farms include:

- used crankcase (engine) oil;
- used liquid and semi-solid gear, chain, and ball bearing lubricants;
- used hydraulic fluid (including brake, automatic transmission, and power steering fluid).

Used oil can also include oils that have become contaminated with air conditioning 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).

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

Materials that contain or are contaminated with used oil can also fall under the definition of used oil. Common examples of these materials include used oil engine filters, rags and wipers, and absorbents (such as kitty litter, speedi-dri, and absorbent pigs). 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 solid waste facility that is permitted to accept them.

The following types of materials are **NOT** regulated as used oils, and must be evaluated as potentially hazardous wastes:

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

### **Are Small Farms Regulated Any Differently than Large Farms?**

Used oil that is generated by small farmers is not subject to the same requirements as used oil generated from large farms. With respect to DEP's used oil rules, a "small farmer" is defined as one who generates less than 25 gallons of used oil per month (averaged over the whole year). To put it more simply, if the total amount of used oil you generate in a calendar year is less than 300 gallons, you are considered a small farmer under DEP's used oil rules.

Used oil generated by small farmers is classified the same as used oil generated by household "Do-It-Yourselfers" (such as from the routine maintenance of their personal cars, trucks, or other vehicles). As a result, small farmer's used oil is exempt from DEP's used oil rules, as long as it is properly disposed of. Proper disposal can include:

- (1) Taking the used oil to an authorized Do-It-Yourselfer used oil collection center; or
- (2) Having the used oil taken away by a hauler who is permitted by DEP to haul used oil.

Most towns in Connecticut will accept Do-It-Yourselfer 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 town, call your town hall for details.

More helpful information for small farmers may be found in DEP's Used Oil Fact Sheet # 9, which is entitled "Management of Household Do-It-Yourselfer Used Oil." Copies of this document may be obtained by visiting the DEP website at [www.ct.gov/dep](http://www.ct.gov/dep), or by contacting DEP at the address/telephone numbers listed at the beginning of this fact sheet.

### **What Requirements Apply to Used Oil Generated on Large Farms?**

Used oil that is generated on large farms (i.e., those that generate over 300 gallons per calendar year) 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 the used oil are also required to have permits

from DEP. More information about how large farms should manage their used oil may be found in DEP's Used Oil Fact Sheet # 7 – "Used Oil Generated From Motor Vehicle Servicing Operations." Copies of this document may be obtained by visiting the DEP website at [www.ct.gov/dep](http://www.ct.gov/dep), or by contacting DEP at the address/telephone numbers listed at the beginning of this fact sheet.

### **May I Use My Used Oil for Road Oiling, Weed Control, or to Keep Dust Down?**

No – under DEP rules, used oil cannot be used for any of these purposes. You should always be careful not to put any amount of oil on the ground, since this can contaminate soil, groundwater, and surface water both on your property and on neighboring properties. Once this kind of contamination occurs, it can be very difficult and expensive to clean up, and can reduce the value of your property. It can also lead to your becoming the subject of a DEP enforcement action, which could include a substantial monetary penalty.

### **May I Burn My Used Oil?**

DEP's used oil rules allow farmers to burn used oil in an oil-fired space heater, as long as the following requirements are met:

- (1) The farmer burns only used oil that the farmer generates, or that is received from household do-it-yourselfer used oil generators;
- (2) The space heater is designed to have a maximum capacity of not more than 0.5 million BTU per hour; and
- (3) The combustion gases from the space heater are vented to the outside air.

Please note that used oil is the only type of waste that may be burned in these types of space heaters. Space heaters may not be used to burn hazardous waste, or used oil that has been mixed with hazardous waste so as to make it hazardous. Also, please note that used oil may only be burned in non-residential space heaters (i.e., those used to heat workshops, garages, or other out buildings associated with the farm). Used oil may not be burned for home heating purposes.

### **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 be immediately reported via DEP's 24-hour spill reporting number: (860) 424-3338.

Farms that store their used oil in underground tanks are likely to be subject to DEP's underground storage tank ("UST") regulations. For more information on these regulations, please see the UST page on DEP's website ([www.ct.gov/dep](http://www.ct.gov/dep)), or call DEP's UST program at (860) 424-3374.

Many farms may be required to have a permit from DEP's Water Management Bureau. For more information on these permits, please see the water permitting page on DEP's website ([www.ct.gov/dep](http://www.ct.gov/dep)), or call the Permitting & Enforcement Division of DEP's Water Management Bureau at (860) 424-3018.

## **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](http://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 Supplemental Fact Sheet # 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.

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