

# STORING AND LABELING HAZARDOUS WASTE



## Thurston County Business Pollution Prevention Program

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## YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS A BUSINESS OWNER / MANAGER

As a business owner, you are responsible for the proper storage and disposal of all hazardous waste that you generate. Businesses that use hazardous materials or produce hazardous waste should also be aware of local fire codes that apply to storage. This fact sheet provides small quantity generators with basic information about hazardous waste storage & containment.

## ACCUMULATION AREAS

An accumulation area is space set aside for storing hazardous waste prior to proper disposal or on-site recycling. In your accumulation area, it is best to mark the area with a sign that reads "Hazardous Waste Accumulation Area" and keep a spill kit nearby.

A satellite accumulation area is a location near any point of waste generation where hazardous waste is initially accumulated in containers, during routine operations, before being consolidated at a designated accumulation area. The area **MUST ALWAYS BE UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE OPERATOR OF THE PROCESS GENERATING THE WASTE OR SECURED** to prevent improper additions of wastes into the satellite containers.

## STORAGE CONTAINERS

Containers used to hold hazardous wastes should:

- Be as small as possible and have a tight-fitting lid.
- Be checked for rust, bulges, dents, or leaks.
- Be compatible with the waste you put into them.
- The container that the product came in may be suitable for storing the waste if the container is in good condition and labeled correctly. Store waste in a container made of the same type of material (plastic, metal, or glass) the product came in.
- Secondary containment should be used to catch liquid spills. A portable plastic tub, a metal drum, a spill pallet, or a dead-end sump all provide adequate secondary containment. For more information, refer to the fact sheet "Secondary Containment," available from the Business Pollution Prevention Program.



## LABELS

Labeling hazardous waste containers is simple to do and reduces liability. Labels can prevent spills, accidents, sloppiness, and wasteful use of a chemical product; prevent unintentional – and unwanted – mixing of different wastes; and eliminate costly laboratory testing of unknown materials. In general, it's a good idea to label containers with the words "hazardous waste". A description of the waste and a description of major risks associate with the waste. Also include necessary precautions to protect employees.

## EMPTY CONTAINERS

Containers are empty when all wastes or contents have been properly removed and less than one inch of waste or no more than one percent of the total capacity is left, whichever is the lesser amount. Containers that held acutely hazardous waste or any pesticide marked with "Danger" or "Warning" labels must be rinsed at least three times with an appropriate cleaner or solvent. The rinse residue must be used or managed as hazardous waste. If your containers meet the definitions of "empty" (as above), after the lids have been removed, they can be reused, recycled by a drum reconditioning firm, put in the dumpster or taken to the local transfer station or landfill. Ideally, try to reuse or recycle your container.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information, including how to set up a free on-site technical assistance visit:

- Call the Thurston County Hazardous Waste Hotline at 360-867-2664 / TDD 360-867-2603
- Email [PHSSPollutionPrevention@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:PHSSPollutionPrevention@co.thurston.wa.us)
- Visit our website at [www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehhw/index.html](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehhw/index.html)

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