

# The Florida Handbook of Solid and Hazardous Waste Regulation: Special Waste Disposal<sup>1</sup>

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## What are special wastes?

Special (hazardous) wastes are wastes that require particular handling and management for disposal. Special wastes include:

- wastes associated with the maintenance and disposal of equipment and machinery, including automobiles and boats
- appliances, including water heaters, air conditioners, and refrigerators (also called “white goods”)
- used oil and filters
- waste tires
- lead-acid batteries
- biomedical materials
- devices containing mercury, cadmium, or lead
- antifreeze and other similar products
- ash residue

## What methods of disposing of used oil are prohibited?

Under Section 403.751, Florida Statutes, state law prohibits the following:

- disposing of used oil into sewers, drainage systems, and septic tanks
- disposing of used oil into any surface water, groundwater, or watercourses, including marine waters
- disposing of used oil in a landfill
- mixing used oil with solid waste that is intended for disposal in a landfill
- mixing used oil with hazardous waste so that the oil is unsuitable for recycling
- common historical practices, such as oiling roads, dust control, weed abatement, or other similar activities that would release used oil into the environment

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## What methods of disposing of used oil are permitted?

The best way to dispose of used oil is to present it for recycling. Certain service stations, auto parts stores, and other automotive businesses collect used oil for recycling. Some local governments maintain free used oil collection centers; others offer curbside collection. There are currently over 1,100 public used oil collection centers throughout Florida. To find a public collection center operating in your area, call 850-245-8789.

## How may I dispose of used oil filters?

Used oil filters must be disposed of properly. While the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulates used oil filters, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) has taken responsibility for administering these EPA rules. Under these rules, used oil filters may not be disposed of in trash as solid waste (except by private homeowners). After testing for hazardous waste status using the Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure (TCLP), commercial disposal of used oil filters involves one of the following:

- recycling non-hazardous wastes (drained, crushed, and sent for scrap metal recycling)
- delivering hazardous filters to a registered Used Oil Filter (UOF) processor for reuse

## How may I dispose of waste tires?

Waste tires are defined as tires that meet at least one of these requirements:

- have been removed from a motor vehicle
- have not been retreaded or regrooved
- are no longer suitable for their original intended purpose

The statute excludes farm tractors and trailers from the definition of motor vehicles, so those tires are exempt. If you have doubts about how to dispose of exempt tires, the existing regulations are good guidelines to follow.

Waste tires may only be disposed of at a permitted solid waste management facility, which includes any facility permitted by FDEP for the disposal of waste tires. Whole waste tires may not be disposed of at a landfill. Waste tires that have been cut into sufficiently small parts may be disposed of or used as a cover layer at a permitted landfill. Waste tires may also be recycled by either the private or public sector,

which is one of the best and easiest ways to dispose of your waste tires. Check your local area for a recycling facility.

## May I store my waste tires?

Waste tires may be kept by a business without a permit if as part of the business you remove tires from motor vehicles and keep fewer than 1,500 waste tires on the business premises at any given time. Most farms would probably fall under this definition. Once you have accumulated 1,500 waste tires, they must be disposed of properly.

## May I hire someone to haul away my waste tires?

You may not hire a waste tire collector for transportation, disposal, or processing of waste tires unless that collector is registered with FDEP. If you hire a waste tire collector to transport more than 25 tires per month, you must maintain records. These records must include the date of transportation, number of tires, registration number of the collector, and the name of the driver.

## How may I dispose of lead-acid batteries?

Lead-acid batteries are batteries used in motor vehicles, vessels, or aircraft. These batteries are special wastes and may not be disposed of in a landfill or in a waste-to-energy facility. They may be collected by a metal salvager, exchanged when purchasing a new battery, or taken to a municipal collection site that will accept lead-acid batteries. Contact your local government to find a collection site near you.

## How may I dispose of other mechanical wastes?

Antifreeze is another waste associated with the use of vehicles and other machinery. Antifreeze must be tested for hazardous properties (specifically, for lead [Pb]) to determine the proper way to dispose of it. Even if it is non-hazardous, used antifreeze may not be disposed of on the ground; in a septic tank, sewer, or storm sewer; or in a dumpster. Antifreeze may only be disposed of as a non-hazardous industrial waste if it is indeed not hazardous.

Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) from automobile air conditioners are regulated as mechanical wastes. State law requires that CFCs be recovered through vacuum units instead of released into the atmosphere.

Most other wastes associated with the use and maintenance of mechanical equipment would be either merely solid waste or hazardous waste and should be disposed of accordingly.

## What are chemical wastes?

Chemical wastes include pesticides and household chemicals. Disposal of chemical wastes is regulated by EPA. There are also state regulations for chemical wastes.

## How does Florida regulate the disposal of pesticides?

Pesticides are discussed in some detail in FE764, FIFRA (Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act). Many of the federal requirements are also required by the state. For example, all pesticides sold, used, or transported in Florida must be registered with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), in addition to required registration with EPA. FDACS is also responsible for testing and training permit applicants and issuing licenses for pesticide applicators, as delegated by EPA under FIFRA. State regulation of pesticides is covered in Chapter 487, Florida Statutes.

## How may I dispose of pesticide wastes?

Disposal of pesticide wastes is really very simple—*follow the directions on the label*. If you follow the label instructions, you will be following the law. Some pesticide containers may be burned or recycled, or buried (see the label instructions) if they are empty and have been triple-rinsed.

## How may I dispose of pesticides that have been recalled?

Pesticides placed under stop-sale, stop-use, removal, or hold orders may not be disposed of in any way without a written release from FDEP. Usually, the substance must be returned to the manufacturer for treatment and disposal.

## How may I dispose of pesticide containers, besides burning?

Pesticide container recycling is a national program supported by most major agrichemical manufacturers and distributors. The program's goal is to recycle empty, clean, plastic agrichemical containers to avoid environmental contamination and to keep these containers out of landfills.

The current end use for the recycled plastic is plastic shipping pallets or use in the agrichemical industry.

Counties participating in pesticide container recycling include Baker, Bradford, Calhoun, Escambia, Flagler, Gadsden, Highlands, Holmes, Jackson, Levy, Madison, Marion, Okaloosa, Okeechobee, Osceola, Polk, Putnam, Santa Rosa, St. Johns, St. Lucie, Union, Volusia, Walton, and Washington. For contact information, see <https://floridadep.gov/waste>.

## What are household hazards?

Household hazards may include:

- cleaning solutions
- paint
- paint thinner
- turpentine
- batteries
- insect sprays
- gardening chemicals
- many other common, everyday substances found around the house

Many of the containers for these substances include label directions for disposal and are regulated under FIFRA or other statutes. Such labels, therefore, carry the force of law. Improper disposal is a violation.

If you have questions about whether a particular chemical or substance may be considered hazardous, contact your county office of waste management, or FDEP (<https://floridadep.gov/>).

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