



## Idaho Department of Environmental Quality Pollution Prevention Champion

### Intermountain Auto Recycling

Rigby, Idaho

2009

#### Environmental Commitment

Intermountain Auto Recycling is a full auto recycling facility that has recently made significant efforts to reduce their impact on the environment.

#### Pollution Prevention Success

##### Mercury Release Prevention

Intermountain Auto is an active participant in the End of Live Vehicle Solutions (ELVS) National Vehicle Mercury Switch Recovery Program (NVMSRP). NVMSRP is designed to recover mercury-containing light switches from scrap vehicles that are melted to make new steel. This will significantly reduce mercury air emissions from the fourth leading source in the United States – the furnaces used in steel making. According to the ELVS Web site as of July 2009, Intermountain Auto has accounted for 24% of all the switches recycled in the state of Idaho. This accounts for 449 switches or one pound of mercury.

##### Material Recovery and Water Protection

In the past year, Intermountain Auto constructed an on-site recycling center to protect the environment while processing cars. The recycling center provides overhead protection from rain and snow and is constructed on a contained impervious surface to prevent fluids from contaminating stormwater and ground water. In the recycling center, Intermountain Auto removes hazardous fluids including gasoline, diesel, motor oil, brake fluid, transmission fluid, antifreeze, and windshield washer fluid. In the past year, they have processed approximately 1,250 cars and recycled an average of 7,350 gallons of gasoline, 500 gallons of diesel, 1,250 gallons of motor oil, 150 gallons of brake fluid, 315 gallons of windshield washer fluid, 2,500 gallons of antifreeze, and 1,250 gallons of transmission fluid. If not captured, contained, and reclaimed or properly treated, these hazardous materials could contaminate ground and surface water.

The motor oil, transmission fluid, and brake fluid are used to generate heat in their recycling center with a used oil burner. Any excess is reused by other businesses or individuals with used oil burners. The gasoline and diesel fuel is used in business or employee vehicles and equipment after adding a fuel treatment. The antifreeze and windshield washer fluid is also reused or sold to the public.

Intermountain Auto works with an ESCO-certified technician to safely remove r-12 and r-134a refrigerants. The refrigerants are processed for reuse at Intermountain Auto or a repair facility that has licensed technicians. Refrigerants are stable, nonflammable, and noncorrosive, but if released into the air, refrigerants drift into the upper atmosphere and destroy the ozone layer that protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

Intermountain Auto recycles batteries from each vehicle and purchases unusable batteries from the public for recycling. Prior to recycling the batteries, they are stored in a contained area protected from rain or snow. In the past year, they have recycled about 1,900 batteries. Additionally, before vehicles are crushed the lead terminals are cut off and recycled. Spent lead-acid batteries contain lead and corrosive acids and can easily corrode and leak if not properly stored and recycled.

## Leadership

Intermountain Auto is also a co-founder and active member of the Eastern Idaho Auto and Truck Recyclers Association. The group meets every other month to discuss local and national issues affecting their yards and how they can improve their practices. They welcome new information and solutions to improve their impact on the environment.

## Benefits

Intermountain Auto's recycling center has reduced their environmental liability, improved environmental protection and worker safety, and increased employee efficiency. Being more efficient with their time enables them to process more cars, resulting in higher profits. Recovering and reusing materials reduces their raw material costs for fuel and oil and prevents pollution. When the NVMSRP program was funded, Intermountain Auto received approximately \$2,000 for the recovered mercury switches.

Intermountain Auto Recycling's employees have a better work environment and upgraded equipment, which boosts morale and has lowered employee turnover. The overall improved appearance of their facility has been noticed by the community, and they frequently receive compliments from customers and other community members.

As of July 2009, the NVMSRP's funds were depleted and ELVS is no longer paying for recycled switches. However, salvage yards can still send in the switches for recycling at no cost.

## For More Information

For more information visit Intermountain Auto Recycling's website at [www.intermountainautorecycling.com](http://www.intermountainautorecycling.com).

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