

What are universal wastes?

Some hazardous wastes are so common, they're practically universal. State and federal environmental rules call these wastes "universal waste."

Most businesses generate universal wastes, which include batteries, some pesticides, mercury-containing equipment, thermostats, and spent lamps.

This brochure is designed to help Idaho businesses with the following:

- Understand the Universal Waste Rule
- Identify and manage universal wastes generated at your business
- Learn how managing universal wastes properly can benefit your business and Idaho's environment



For more information

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

State Office

Waste Management and Remediation Division

1410 N. Hilton
Boise, ID 83706
(208) 373-0502

Regional Offices

Boise

1445 N. Orchard
Boise, ID 83706
(208) 373-0550
toll-free: (888) 800-3480

Lewiston

1118 F Street
Lewiston, ID 83501
(208) 799-4370
toll-free: (877) 541-3304

Coeur d'Alene

2110 Ironwood Parkway
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
(208) 769-1422
toll-free: (877) 370-0017

Pocatello

444 Hospital Way #300
Pocatello, ID 83201
(208) 236-6160
toll-free: (888) 655-6160

Idaho Falls

900 N. Skyline, Suite B
Idaho Falls, ID 83402
(208) 528-2650
toll-free: (800) 232-4635

Twin Falls

650 Addison Ave. W,
Suite 110
Twin Falls, ID 83301
(208) 736-2190
toll-free: (800) 270-1663

Web Resources

Hazardous Waste in Idaho

www.deq.idaho.gov/hazardous-waste

Universal Wastes

www.deq.idaho.gov/universal-wastes

Universal Wastes

<https://www.epa.gov/hw/universal-waste>



Printed on recycled paper; DEQ May 2018. PID 0205,
CA 30060. Costs associated with this publication are available from the
State of Idaho Department of Environmental Quality in accordance with
Section 60-202, Idaho Code.



Hazardous Waste in Idaho

Properly Managing Universal Wastes



Idaho Department of
Environmental Quality
www.deq.idaho.gov



What is hazardous waste?

Hazardous waste poses a threat to human health and the environment due to inherent properties such as toxicity, ignitability, corrosivity, or reactivity.

Every business in Idaho is required to track the volume of wastes generated and determine whether each is hazardous. Facilities that generate hazardous waste are regulated by state and federal rules that govern permitting, storage, transport, and disposal.

What is the Universal Waste Rule?

The Universal Waste Rule allows certain hazardous wastes known as universal wastes to be managed under streamlined requirements. The rule is designed to encourage recycling and proper disposal of some common hazardous wastes and to reduce the regulatory burden on businesses that generate these wastes. Idaho has adopted the federal Universal Waste Rule, so Idaho's requirements are identical to those of the federal government.

What businesses does the Universal Waste Rule apply to?

The Universal Waste Rule applies to both small and large quantity hazardous waste generators and transporters. It does not apply to treatment, storage, and disposal facilities.

- **Small quantity generator (SQG):**
Generates between 220 and 2,200 pounds of hazardous waste per calendar month
- **Large quantity generator (LQG):**
Generates 2,200 or more pounds of hazardous waste (or 2.2 or more pounds of acute hazardous waste) per calendar month

Remember:

Universal wastes are still hazardous wastes and must be managed accordingly.

Universal Wastes

Batteries such as nickel-cadmium (Ni-Cd) and small sealed lead-acid batteries, which are found in many common items including electronic equipment, cell phones, portable computers, and emergency backup lighting

Agricultural pesticides that have been recalled or banned from use, are obsolete, have become damaged, or are no longer needed due to changes in use

Thermostats, which can contain as much as 3 grams of liquid mercury and are located in almost any building including commercial, industrial, agricultural, community, and household buildings

Spent lamps, which can contain mercury or lead (e.g., fluorescent, high-intensity discharge [HID], neon, mercury vapor, high-pressure sodium, and metal halide lamps)

Mercury-containing equipment used in industry, hospitals, and households (e.g., thermostats containing mercury, barometers, manometers, temperature and pressure gauges, and mercury switches such as light switches in automobiles)

Other materials are under consideration for designation as universal wastes. For more information, contact DEQ.

What about very small quantity generators?

Although the rule does not apply specifically to very small quantity generators (VSQGs), they may benefit as well.

VSQGs are businesses that generate no more than 220 pounds of hazardous waste (or no more than 2.2 pounds of acute hazardous waste) per calendar month. By managing and recycling their universal wastes according to the rule, VSQGs do not have to count these wastes toward their monthly waste generation volume. Doing so may help a facility maintain its VSQG status by keeping monthly hazardous waste generation rates below the threshold for the category.

In addition, the VSQG will be helping protect the environment through proper recycling, treatment, and disposal.

What requirements must be met?

You must store universal wastes in an environmentally responsible manner so that no spills or leaks occur. Waste must be sent to an approved universal waste handler or universal waste destination facility.

How does the Universal Waste Rule benefit my business?

The Universal Waste Rule can save you time and money! You can reduce compliance costs and the amount of time spent on paperwork.

Universal waste management requirements are less stringent than those for other hazardous wastes.

The following are some of the benefits:

- **Longer storage times:** You can accumulate universal waste for up to 1 year before sending it for disposal.
- **Less hazardous waste counted toward total:** You don't need to include universal waste when you figure your hazardous waste generator status and when you calculate your monthly accumulation total.
- **Exemption from certain hauling requirements:** You don't need a hazardous waste manifest when shipping your universal waste, and you don't need to use a registered waste hauler to transport your universal waste in Idaho.