



RAMSEY COUNTY

Saint Paul –
Ramsey County
Public Health

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Providing useful
information
to businesses
licensed as
hazardous
waste
generators by
Ramsey County
Environmental
Health

The HazWaste Quarterly

Hazardous Waste Disposal - Choosing Wisely

Selecting a hazardous waste transporter

As a hazardous waste generator, your company is responsible for that waste from “cradle to grave” – from the time the waste is first generated through its final disposal. Minimize your liability by looking for ways to reduce the amount of hazardous waste you generate. For waste reduction ideas, contact the Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MnTAP) at 612-624-1300 or mntap@umn.edu.

After exhausting all your waste reduction options, you may need to have your waste transported off site to a recycling or disposal facility. Choose your transporter with care by considering the following:

Understand your company's needs

Know the type, amount and physical state of your hazardous waste; how often you will need to make a shipment; the location of the facility selected to manage your waste and the types of containers holding the waste.

Research the transporter

Hazardous waste transporters have specific requirements. They must have various licenses, permits, registrations, training and insurance. You will want to hire a transporter with a good reputation and working knowledge of the hazardous waste rules.

When you have selected a few companies, ask them detailed, specific questions to check their knowledge. Waste loading procedures, driver training, container markings and labels, placarding, proper permits or registrations, and manifesting requirements are all areas that responsible companies are familiar with and they should be able to answer your questions. Ask for references and call them.

Hazardous waste disposal options

Hazardous waste may not be burned on site, evaporated, diluted or dumped on the ground. With specific approvals, some corrosive wastes may be neutralized, then sewered. Most hazardous wastes are managed by sending them off-site for recycling or disposal.

Carefully consider the facility you use

Generally, the more expensive the disposal method, the more it reduces your long term liability for the waste. Talk with several potential facilities about the disposal method for your waste. Then, choose the method that is best for your company and the waste involved.

Before your final selection:

- If possible, have someone from your company visit the facility. This will give you an excellent idea of how the facility's daily operations are run and how your waste will be managed.
- If you can't visit, talk to your trade association representative or others in

your industry. Have they heard anything from others who may have used this company? Do they have any recommendations for you?

- Contact the facility's state regulatory agency and talk with the inspector. Ask them questions about compliance: were there any violations, what were they, were they considered major or minor

and were they resolved.

- Lastly, contact the facility representatives. Ask them very specific questions regarding their waste acceptance policies, time lines for shipments, waste handling and management practices, and safety records. Request references and talk to them.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) fact sheet Step 6: Treat or Dispose of Hazardous Waste can supply you with more details. Check it out as www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/w-hw1-06.pdf.





Local Auto Body Shops Change Paint for Cleaner Air

Two local businesses in Ramsey County have made the extra effort and investment to improve our air quality.

With funding from the state of Minnesota, Windy's Collision Center and Heppner's Auto Body converted their painting operations from solvent based to water based paint. In doing so, each shop reduced its volume of VOCs (volatile organic compounds) by about 500 pounds. What does 500 pounds mean? If you can imagine one can of spray paint containing two pounds of VOCs, then each shop has prevented 250 cans of paint and air pollutants from reaching our atmosphere. Not only were their VOC's reduced, the volume of hazardous waste was drastically reduced. Although solvents are still necessary for the clear coating component of auto body work, the amount of hazardous waste was cut in half leading to large cost savings for disposal of these wastes. Not only is there cost savings related to less waste, the safety and quality of their work environment improved from the reduction of dangerous materials. We can all breathe better from that!



If you haven't made the conversion yet, don't despair!

There is likely to be another allotment of grant funding from the state this fall. Eric David, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) can assist business with this funding; he can be reached at 651-757-2218 or eric.david@state.mn.us. Further grant funding is also available through the Environmental Initiative where Bjorn Olson can provide technical assistance, including site visits; Bjorn can be reached at 612-334-3388 ext. 8113 or bolson@en-in.org.



Hello

Please join us in welcoming Caroline Lund to the Solid and Hazardous Waste Compliance program! Caroline was employed for the past two years as a hazardous waste inspector for Washington County. Prior to that, she worked for Jackson Laboratories, a large genetics institution, taught college biology at Hibbing Community College, served as a graduate research/teaching assistant and laboratory technician. She has a BA in biology, with a chemistry minor, a master's degree in integrated bioscience and CHMM credential. Caroline can be reached at 651-266-1180 or caroline.lund@co.ramsey.mn.us.



Goodbye

After 22 years with Ramsey County, Greg LaMere retired from his position as an Environmental Health Specialist II on July 5, 2017. During his time here, Greg inspected in every zip code in the county, primarily concentrating his efforts in 55109 and 55117. He was instrumental in developing the county's pre-demolition inspection program, which requires an on-site inspection to ensure removal and proper management of all hazardous wastes and materials prior to the building's demolition. Greg looks forward to pursuing his personal passions of golf, fishing and hanging out with his grandkids. Join us in wishing him well in his retirement!



MCES's General Dentistry Site-Check Program

Amalgam Recovery Program

Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES), in partnership with the Minnesota Dental Association, administers an Amalgam Recovery Program. As part of MCES' regulatory function of overseeing the discharge of wastewater to sanitary sewers, MCES will conduct "Site-Checks" at a small number of dental offices in the metropolitan area, including Ramsey County. These site-checks, which are completely separate from Ramsey County's hazardous waste regulatory program, will allow MCES to see how the recovery program is working in actual office settings, get input from those with first-hand experience operating amalgam separators, (used for treating vacuum system wastewater), and to see if offices have questions regarding their participation in this program.

MCES has begun conducting several random site-checks

If MCES determines that these site-checks are beneficial to both MCES and the dental offices, more will be scheduled. MCES will schedule the site-checks ahead of time, so dental offices will know when to expect MCES staff. Contact Peter Berglund at 651-602-4708 or N. Jacob Buringolts at 651-602-4714 with any questions.



Self Audit Reports to be Mailed in September

The self-audit program: a successful change in regulatory procedure

The self-audit program is an alternative regulatory program for some relatively low-risk hazardous waste generators. By filling out the self-audit report, dentists, chiropractors and photo finishers are guided through the proper management of their hazardous wastes and reminded of the procedures to be followed that will ensure compliance. While the program is a success for most of the county's self-audit generators, a major problem occurs for companies who do NOT complete or return their reports by the deadline.

Complete and return your report by November 15

Failing to do so violates the Ramsey County Hazardous Waste Management Ordinance. Non-compliance with this reporting requirement may result in a referral to the County Attorney's office for possible legal action.

Additionally, your company could be removed from the self-audit program and reinstated into the hazardous waste regulatory program, resulting in more frequent inspections and more regulatory scrutiny.

So, if you miss the deadline, what could this mean for your business?

In addition to legal action, you will:

- Be required to complete an annual report form.
- Pay an increased fee based on the volume of hazardous waste generated (not a flat fee).
- Be subject to routine compliance inspections.

Avoid hassles

Complete and return your report by November 15. For questions, contact Laura Piotrowski at laura.piotrowski@co.ramsey.mn.us or 651-266-1185.

Save the Date!

As part of the annual RAM/SWANA Solid Waste & Recycling Fall conference, the 3rd annual hazardous waste pre conference workshop will be held on October 16, 2017, at the Minneapolis Marriot Northwest. Join your colleagues who are responsible for hazardous waste compliance, along with hazardous waste vendors, and local and state regulatory staff. The agenda includes regulatory updates and effective management and compliance strategies. For additional details, visit recycleminnesota.org/news-events/ram-swana-annual-conference-show.

Questions, Questions (and some answers!)

A couple of colleagues I know told me that Ramsey County provided hazardous waste training at their site. They both told me that this training was specific to their business's training needs and it helped them understand their hazardous waste compliance issues. We are interested in learning more about this type of training. Can you help?



Ramsey County does offer site specific hazardous waste compliance training at the your location. Your first step is to connect with our business assistance staff, Karen Reilly. Working with your staff, she'll develop a program that's been customized for your site, your wastes, your training needs.

The training's format could include any of the following:

- A walkthrough site visit, discussing your hazardous waste storage and other compliance topics.
- An informal discussion with your staff, using our training handbook as a guide.
- A PowerPoint presentation, which can cover a variety of topics and use actual photos or examples of your hazardous waste storage areas, spill response or emergency procedures.



Once the training format has been determined, Karen will work with you to schedule the training at a time and place that is convenient for you and your business.

Past reviews of this training have been favorable and we have seen improvements in the compliance efforts at these site specific trained sites. Even better, the cost is free to you as a licensed generator in Ramsey County.

Contact Karen Reilly at 651-266-1186 or karen.reilly@co.ramsey.mn.us to discuss your training needs today.



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