

Household Do-it Yourself Used Oil and Filters

Materials Management Guidance



Citizens working on their own vehicles are encouraged to recycle their used oil and oil filters.

Recycling these items is easy:

1. Try not to spill any used oil on the ground. If you do have a small spill onto the ground, use sorbents like cat litter or oil dry products to clean it up. Sorbents that don't have liquids present can be put in the trash if your waste hauler and landfill will accept it.
2. After draining the used oil from the vehicle or equipment, put your used oil in a clean plastic container with a tight lid labeled "Used Oil." Check with your local collection center to determine what types of containers they accept. In most areas you may reuse the original motor oil bottles, milk and water jugs, or purchase commercially available recycling containers. DO NOT use a container that previously held household chemicals, such as cleaners, solvents, fuels (gasoline), paint, or bleach. The used oil can pick up contaminants from those containers and may make recycling difficult and more expensive.
3. Do not mix the used oil with any other wastes like transmission fluid or antifreeze without permission from the place where you are taking the used oil. Do not add solvents, brake cleaners, paints, etc. to the used oil.
4. Place the flat end of the filter in the drain pan or on the used oil recycling container to allow as much of the used oil as possible to drain out of the filter. It is recommended that you leave the filter in this draining position for at least 12 hours. Locate the draining operation in an area where children and pets can't reach. Add this used oil to the other removed used oil.
5. Take used motor oil and filters to a recycling center. Contact your [Michigan County Recycling and Household Hazardous Waste Contact](#) or go to Earth911.org for collection programs near you. In some areas, auto supply stores, or other locations collect oil for recycling. See if they also take other automotive fluids, like transmission fluids and antifreeze, if you have that waste.

6. Contact your [Michigan County Recycling and Household Hazardous Waste Contact](#) to check if they accept emptied oil containers with other plastic containers. Containers that have not been completely drained of oil are not recyclable. To prepare them for recycling, drain them overnight and put that oil with the other removed used oil. Empty oil containers may be added to the trash if not recycled. Check with your waste hauler if they have any special requirements.

In Michigan, used oil in a liquid form CANNOT be disposed by:

- ⊗ dumping it down drains or sewers or into surface or groundwater, or onto the ground
- ⊗ sending to a landfill
- ⊗ Burning it in municipal solid waste incinerators or other incinerators without energy recovery
- ⊗ Using it as dust control or weed control

Used oil from a single oil change can ruin a million gallons of fresh water.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has more information about [Managing, Reusing, and Recycling Used Oil](#).

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