

COLLISION/AUTO BODY REPAIR

WHY BE CONCERNED?

Collision repair shops often use a variety of processes and chemicals that may generate wastes that differ from the basic domestic wastes generated by a home. Home-based businesses and hobbyists that offer collision repair services generate paint and solvent wastes similar to the wastes commercial businesses generate. These chemicals and associated wastes should be labeled, used, stored, and disposed of in a responsible manner to prevent environmental contamination and to comply with the law. While it may seem that your contribution to pollution is minor, the combined effects of chemicals, runoff, and improper waste disposal from hundreds or thousands of homes in your region can really add up. The following pages contain a self-assessment checklist to help you identify potential sources of pollution.



- Compost
- Recycle
- On-site landfill (prohibited in most cases)
- Incineration/on-site burning (see solid Waste section)

IDENTIFY ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

Specific processes and potential wastes associated with this business/hobby could harm the environment and are listed below. Check the processes and wastes that apply to your business.

- Vehicle prep and body work using tapes and papers.
- Use of a paint booth with filters.
- Processes generating paint wastes.
- Use of a spray gun.
- Thinners and parts washing: waste solvents.
- Use of spray cans.
- Use of solvent-contaminated shop rags.
- Oil, antifreeze, brake and transmission fluid services: leaking waste fluids and filters associated with minor maintenance.
- Battery and part replacement: old batteries and parts.
- Vehicle washing: wash water and cleaning chemicals.
- Vehicle parking: leaking fluids.
- Storage of materials such as solvents.
- Unused or abandoned wells on site.

IDENTIFY METHODS OF WASTE DISPOSAL

Check the waste disposal methods that you use.

- Municipal sanitary sewer
- Septic system or lagoon
- Ground, storm sewer, or surface water
- Licensed hazardous waste disposal option
- Licensed sanitary landfill/transfer station

If your home-based business discharges its non-domestic waste to a septic system, then your business is required to complete and submit an inventory form to KDHE. For inventory forms, call KDHE at 785-296-5560. Some wastes associated with a home business are considered "industrial waste" and may not be disposed of in a septic tank or domestic lagoon. Non-domestic waste from your home-based occupation should not be disposed of in a sanitary sewer without written permission from the municipality. Never put wastes in a storm drain or dump on the ground! See Wastewater section in the front of this publication.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

- Over-spray paper and masking tape may or may not be hazardous, depending on the amount of over spray and type of paint used. Paints that contain metals such as lead, nickel, and chromium will be more likely to test hazardous. It is the shop's responsibility to make this determination and have the waste tested if needed. Body filler dust from sanding is typically not hazardous unless it has been mixed with another hazardous waste.
- Home-based occupations and hobbyists that do collision repair work generally do not have paint booths in their shops. But if you do, and the paints you use contain heavy metals such as lead, nickel, and chromium, your filters may be hazardous.

- Solvent-based paint wastes or paint wastes that contain heavy metals like lead, nickel, and chromium are generally considered hazardous wastes. These wastes need to be collected in an approved container and labeled with the words "hazardous waste" until they can be properly disposed of.

The Small Business Environmental Assistance Program, SBEAP, is a confidential non-regulatory program funded by the state in an effort to assist small businesses with environmental concerns. Contact the SBEAP at 800-578-8898 or www.sbeap.org if you have questions.

Save yourself money and regulatory headaches – use water-based paints and paints that do not contain heavy metals whenever possible. See pollution prevention tips listed below.

- Spray-gun wastes and associated solvents are typically hazardous because they are ignitable and/or toxic. Again, collect this waste material accordingly in a labeled container. Never allow it to be discharged to a drain or the ground.
- Spray cans that are completely empty can be disposed of in the trash. Spray cans that are only partially empty and have a malfunction generally need to be disposed of as hazardous waste if they cannot be completely used up.
- Shop rags contaminated with solvents may or may not be hazardous, depending on the type of solvent used. If you use a solvent that contains a non-F003 "listed" waste (as designated in the *Hazardous Waste Generators Handbook*) such as methyl ethyl ketone or toluene, then these rags may need to be treated as hazardous waste. Washing these rags in a home washer hooked to an on-site septic system or lagoon may cause contamination of that system and the associated groundwater and is strictly prohibited. If you are hooked up to sanitary sewer, permission to discharge this wash water is required. Whenever possible, choose less hazardous alternatives like water or alcohols. See *Solvent Contaminated Rags*, KDHE Technical Guidance, available from the KDHE Web site or by calling SBEAP.
- Most vehicle waste fluids, like used oil, antifreeze, brake fluid, and transmission fluid, are reusable or recyclable. As long as these fluids have not been contaminated with another type of fluid or solvent, label and containerize them for reuse or proper recycling. Filters from these services should be drained for 24 hours and then disposed of as solid waste or recycled through a vendor.
- Spent-lead acid batteries need to be treated as hazardous waste unless they are recycled through a licensed vendor. Cracked or leaking batteries should be handled as hazardous waste.
- Vehicle and fleet washing includes exterior washing to remove dirt and may or may not include use of soap. Washing equipment, vehicles, or pavement generates wastewater that should be diverted away from storm drain inlets and to a sanitary sewer whenever possible. Some cities in Kansas regulate by permit activity that generates this type of wash wastewater.
- When parking areas are used for vehicle storage and maintenance, and supply loading or storage, wastes related to leaking vehicle fluids and spills can become an environmental liability. Use care to capture and quickly repair vehicle fluid leaks, container leaks, and spills. Use a dry method for cleanup of this material, not a method that simply washes the spilled contents into the gutter or grass (see Spill Control section). Oils or other fluids generated as a result of equipment maintenance should be properly stored, recycled, or disposed of (see Auto Service and Small Engine Repair section).
- Storage of chemicals and wastes should be done in a manner to prevent spills and environmental contamination. Control of inventory prevents you from having to pay for a product twice—once as a material and then again as a hazardous waste. Keep an MSDS on hand for all materials, maintain original labels whenever possible, and label hazardous wastes accordingly. Inspect the area periodically for problems associated with leaks or storage incompatibilities.
- Unused or abandoned wells should be plugged in accordance with KDHE regulations. Abandoned wells, if not properly sealed, can provide a direct route for contamination to enter the groundwater. In addition, open wells are a safety threat to small children and animals. A record of the plugging should be filed with KDHE. For more information, consult the general Water Section of this document, or call KDHE at 785-296-3565.

Disposal of any wastes other than domestic wastes to an on-site septic system or lagoon is prohibited. Never dump wastes onto the ground or into a storm drain. This practice can result in the contamination of streams, lakes, or groundwater.

POLLUTION PREVENTION AND WASTE MINIMIZATION OPPORTUNITIES

- Water-based paints help reduce VOC emissions and make it possible to use water-based solvent for cleaning purposes.
- Use water-based and high-solids coatings whenever possible.
- Mix only enough paint needed for the job.
- Use thinners with a low VOC rating, and reuse and recycle waste thinner by using spent solvent to clean guns or other equipment.
- Use high-volume, low-pressure (HVLP) spray guns, and routinely attend operator training.
- Choose non-listed and non-toxic paints and solvents so that spent booth filters and rags can be disposed of in a landfill, if dry and not ignitable.
- Use enclosed gun washers; never leave a gun soaking in a container of solvent without a tight-fitting lid. This causes solvent loss.
- Use dirty solvent for precleaning, then finish-clean with a clean solvent to minimize solvent usage.
- Allow solvent from spray-gun cleaning to settle in a bulk container, then decant or pump off the clear solvent for reuse in paint thinning processes or to clean spray guns.
- Secondary containment is a recommended practice when bulk quantities of solvent are stored.
- Store spent batteries inside and protect them from damage until they can be sent for recycling.
- Plug any indoor drains not connected to a sanitary (city) sewer.
- Use catch pans to prevent leaks, drips, and spills from reaching the floor.
- Use "dry cleanup" methods. Scrape and scoop instead of washing areas down.
- Inventory your chemical storage and ensure storage in a manner to prevent spills and leaks.
- Control your inventory to prevent overuse or underuse of materials at your shop. Don't allow your raw materials to become too old and unusable, creating hazardous wastes.
- Determine which wastes are hazardous wastes, solid wastes, or recyclable.

- Properly dispose of these wastes and maintain disposal records for three or more years as required by law.
- Keep waste streams separate for reuse, recycling, or treatment. Keep non-hazardous materials from becoming contaminated. If you put hazardous waste into oil, the entire mixture can become hazardous waste.
- Abandoned wells should be plugged and reported in accordance with KDHE regulations (see Water section).

WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION

- The Kansas SBEAP has several publications that address these issues of regulatory compliance and pollution prevention for auto service and repair business. See the list of SBEAP publications at the end of this manual, or go to **www.sbeap.org** to view or download.
- For questions, call 800-578-8898. All services are free and confidential.
- A summary of environmental laws is found in the introduction/preface. The following laws may be applicable to this business:
 - wastewater regulations
 - hazardous and solid waste regulations
 - air regulations (shops using more than nine tons of paints/solvents annually)
 - storm water regulations
- Regulatory compliance information can be viewed or downloaded from the KDHE Web site at **www.kdhe.state.ks.us**.
- The Coordinating Committee for Automotive Repair (CCAR) Information Center is a federally sponsored program that has a virtual garage featured on its Web site. Users may point and click on various items for information. Go to **<http://www.ccar-greenlink.org/>** for more information.
- See Resources section at the back of this document.

SOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- Some materials adapted from the *Auto Body Shops, A Primer on Environmental Regulations and Pollution Prevention*, a KSU document.
- Some materials adapted from *A Guide for Auto Body Shops*, Washington State Department of Ecology.

