

# **STORING AND LABELING HAZARDOUS WASTE**

## **The Problem:**

As a business owner you are responsible for the proper storage and disposal of all hazardous waste that you generate. This fact sheet provides small quantity generators (less than 220 lbs or 27 gallons waste generated a month) with basic information about hazardous waste containment.

## **Accumulation Area**

An accumulation area is a space set aside for storing hazardous waste prior to disposal or on-site recycling. In your businesses accumulation area it is recommended to:

- 1) Restrict access to only those employees who regularly dispose of waste and are trained in health and safety issues and waste management regulations.
- 2) Place waste containers away from frequently traveled areas such as walkways, parking areas, or customer reception areas.
- 3) Keep a spill kit nearby. Have appropriate absorbents and neutralizing materials on hand and a plan for how to use them.

## **Storage Containers**

Storage containers should be

- 1) As small as possible with a tight fitting lid,
- 2) Be checked for rust, bulges, dents, or leaks,
- 3) Be compatible with the waste you put in them. For example do not put an acid in unlined metals drums, or solvents in plastic drums, and
- 4) The container that the product came in may be suitable for storing waste if the container is in good condition and labeled correctly.

## **Labeling Recyclable Materials and Universal Wastes**

Some wastes with hazardous properties are exempt from regulation as dangerous waste as long as the waste is recycled and certain requirements for labeling, storage, and transportation are followed. These include antifreeze, batteries, used oil, mercury thermostats and lamps, and shop towels. For more information see the Department of Ecology Web fact sheet [www.ecy.wa.gov/pubs/98407.pdf](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/pubs/98407.pdf)

## **Labeling**

Labeling hazardous waste containers is simple to do and reduces liability. Labeling helps ensure that wastes are added to proper containers. By knowing what is in a container, you can avoid costly lab testing. Labeling is also important to worker safety. Pre-printed labels can be printed off from the following website

[www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/hwtr/hw\\_labels/index.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/hwtr/hw_labels/index.html)

or obtained from your hazardous waste hauler. It is recommended to label containers:

- 1) With the words “Hazardous Waste”
- 2) The major risk associated with the waste (ignitable, toxic, corrosive, or reactive), and
- 3) A description of the waste in terms workers understand.

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