



Environmental Compliance Guide for Wineries

Understanding and keeping up with all the regulations for your business can be a challenge. This self-assessment guide provides a starting point to identify environmental regulations that may apply to your winery or wine making operations.

Drinking Water Requirements

If your business has its own water supply (on-site water well) and you serve at least 25 people (employees and/or visitors) per day at least 60 days per year, your business is considered a public water supply. When operating a public water supply, there are many details specific to design and operational criteria. Contact the Division of Drinking and Ground Waters in your local [Ohio EPA district office](#) for more information about requirements for a new system or converting a private water system to a public water system. Please note that even if you don't meet the criteria for a public water supply, your local health department may have other regulatory requirements specific to any on-site wells.

Wastewater Requirements

If you are connected to a public sewer system, you must contact your local sewer authority prior to discharging any wastewater. Many local sewer authorities will have additional permitting and/or treatment requirements if you discharge process water (wastewater not from toilets and hand sinks) or restaurant wastewater. If you are not connected to sewers, you will want to speak to your local sewer authority to determine if sewers are available and accessible. Under Ohio law you may be required to connect to easily accessible sewers as opposed to utilizing an on-site treatment system such as a septic system. Some sanitary sewer extensions may require a permit-to-install (PTI) from Ohio EPA. More information may be found in the [Permit-to-Install Requirements for Sanitary Sewer Projects](#) fact sheet.

If you have your own sanitary wastewater system, such as a septic system, it must be approved by Ohio EPA. If your system has already been approved, any new changes in wastewater flow rate or strength may require a re-evaluation by Ohio EPA. Examples include the addition of food preparation, expanding your food service or an increase in seating capacity. The [On-site Sewage Treatment Site Evaluation Form](#) can help determine the expected flow from your proposed winery. You should compare what the system is authorized to accept and what flows are expected (strength and volume) from your operations. If you are building a new sewage treatment system, you will also need to complete the [On-site Sewage Treatment Site Evaluation Form](#).

Building a new sewage system or modifying an existing one will also require a PTI from Ohio EPA. If you have any industrial process water such as effluent from grape pressing, wastewater from cleaning tanks, equipment or washing floors/walls in the wine making area or effluent from bottling, the discharge may not be able to go directly into an on-site treatment system due to its high strength. In this case, a holding tank which will allow these discharges to be pumped and hauled directly to the local wastewater treatment plant may be required. The installation of a holding tank will also require a PTI.

Please contact the [Office of Compliance Assistance and Pollution Prevention \(OCAPP\)](#) or the Division of Surface Water (DSW) in your local [district office](#) with any questions about your wastewater requirements.

Storm Water and Wetland Requirements

If you have any raw materials, byproducts or waste products associated with the wine making facility that may come in contact with rain, run-off or snowmelt, your facility likely requires a [storm water permit](#) from Ohio EPA. The permit requires that you monitor the storm water and develop a storm water pollution prevention plan. Review the [Does my small business need a storm water permit?](#) guidance document for more information. If you do not store materials outside, you may qualify for a [No Exposure Certification](#) instead of obtaining a storm water permit.

If you have a planned construction project that will disturb one or more acres of land (clearing of vegetation), or if your facility is a part of a larger development project, you need a [construction storm water permit](#) to control sediment and

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pollutant runoff during rain and snow events. For more information, see the [Small Construction Projects Require Storm Water Permits](#) guidance document.

You should also be aware of wetland regulations when disturbing any portions of land. Under Sections 401 and 404 of the federal Clean Water Act, disturbance of wetlands may require a [401 water quality certification](#) from Ohio EPA and a [404 permit from the Army Corps of Engineers](#). For more information, see the [Ohio Wetlands](#) fact sheet.

Please contact [OCAPP](#) or DSW in your local [district office](#) about the construction storm water program, wetlands regulations and associated requirements.

Waste Management Requirements

Wineries may generate various forms of waste materials that must be properly managed. Proper management may include sending the waste to a local landfill, or more sustainable options like on-site composting. One commonly generated waste stream is pomace - the skins, pulp, seeds and stems of the fruit used in the wine making process. You may send pomace to a permitted solid waste landfill or you can choose to compost the pomace on-site. Depending on the origin of the grapes, where the compost will be used and the size of the composting area, Ohio EPA's composting rules may apply. Contact the Division of Materials and Waste Management in your local [district office](#) for help determining the applicability of composting regulations. Some wineries choose to reincorporate the pomace back into their vineyards. Ohio EPA considers this practice [land application](#) which requires plan approval. Please contact DSW in your local [district office](#) regarding Ohio EPA's land application plan approval process.

Another common waste that you may generate is used oil from vehicles and equipment, lubricating oil and compressor and refrigerant oils. Used oil requires special management considerations. For more information, see Ohio EPA's [The Regulation of Used Oil: An Overview for Ohio Businesses Who Generate Used Oil](#) guidance document. Specifically, tanks, drums or other containers must be labeled Used Oil. Used oil burned in a heater for heating purposes is allowed if you meet certain conditions. For more information, see Ohio EPA's [Burning Used Oil in a Space Heater - For Businesses](#) guidance document.

Spent light bulbs (lamps), batteries and mercury-containing devices (for example, thermostats and mercury thermometers) can be considered hazardous waste when destined for disposal. You can manage these common waste streams under Ohio's less stringent requirements called the [universal waste rules](#). More information regarding the proper management of universal waste can be found in the [Universal Waste](#) and [Are You Handling Used Lamps Correctly](#) guidance documents.

All wastes generated should be properly evaluated through [generator knowledge](#) or analytical testing to determine if it is hazardous prior to disposal. Examples of some common wastes that may be considered hazardous are waste herbicides and pesticides, solvents from equipment cleaning and maintenance, caustic cleaners and waste paint. More information can be found in the [Identifying Your Hazardous Waste](#) guidance document. If you have questions, contact the hazardous waste inspector in the Division of Environmental Response and Revitalization at your local [district office](#).

Air Pollution Requirements

Air pollution sources at your facility require evaluation to determine if they require an air permit. Examples of air pollution sources that may require an air permit include stationary fuel-burning (gasoline, natural gas, diesel or waste oil) equipment, standby emergency generators, boilers, crushing, grinding and conveying operations. [OCAPP](#), [your local air agency](#) or your [district office](#) can help you evaluate air pollution sources and determine if you need an air permit. For more information, see the [Does My Small Business Need an Air Permit?](#) guidance document.

Open burning is only allowed under certain circumstances and in certain localities. Under no circumstances are you allowed to burn your trash or other types of solid waste. For more information, see the [Before You Light It...Know Ohio EPA's Open Burning Regulations](#) brochure. Please note local ordinances may be more stringent than Ohio EPA's requirements, so it's best to check with your local health department and fire department if you plan to conduct any open burning.

Contact

If you have more questions about Ohio EPA's rules, please contact [OCAPP](#) for free and confidential help at (800) 329-7518. You can also contact your local [district office](#) for assistance.