

# Used Oil

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## F A C T S

If **you** own a car, you probably know that it's important to **have** the oil changed regularly--or to change it yourself--to keep your **automobile** running properly. But did you know that **it's** just as important to dispose of **the** used motor oil correctly? According to the **Ameri-**can Petroleum Institute (1988), Ohioans generate approximately 39.8 million gallons of used motor oil **each** year, primarily as a result of engine oil replacement. 18.7 million **gallons** are generated as a result of oil changes done by 'do-it-yourselfers.'

While current national figures indicate a sharp increase in recycling in the last few years (**five** percent in 1988 to **32 percent in 1991**), U.S. EPA figures (1992) indicate that, nationwide, **do-it-**yourselfers illegally dispose of 42 million **gallons of used oil a year** by dumping it on the ground, down the drain or into storm sewers.

• In the U.S. approximately 42 million gallons a year of used motor oil are poured down drains or sewers or on the ground, and 52 million gallons are disposed in the trash by people who change their own oil. Compare this to the 10 million gallons spilled by the Exxon Valdez in Alaska in 1989, or the 150 million gallons spilled in the Persian Gulf in 1991.

• Improper disposal of used oil costs money—your money! You pay in higher consumer prices, taxes for environmental cleanups, and increased health care costs when wastes are improperly managed. Recycling saves money and protects the environment. So help be part of the solution, not part of the problem!

## Recycling Used Oil

Although oil **picks up** metals and acids **as** it circulates through the engine block and crankcase of a motor vehicle, it never loses its lubricating properties. These contaminants can be removed through the re-refining process. Recycling used oil for use as an industrial fuel or re-refining it as a lubricant conserves natural resources, **save5** energy, and is beneficial to the environment. It takes 42 **gallons** of crude oil to produce 2.5 quarts of lubricating oil, while one **gallon** of used oil will produce the same 2.5 quarts. Reducing reliance on oil imports saves energy while lowering environmental risks from oil drilling and oil spills.

## Improper Disposal Concerns

Improper disposal of **used oil can cause harmful** pollution of the **soil**, rivers, lakes, and **ground** water, **as well as damage to local** water treatment plants. Dumping used oil onto the ground can contaminate

underground water supplies and is nearly impossible to clean up. Used oil does not readily dissolve in water and is slow to degrade in the environment. **One** pint of oil can produce an oil slick nearly one acre in size. Used oil from a **single** oil change (approximately 4 **quarts of oil**) can ruin 1 million gallons of water-a **year's** supply for 50 people.

## Proper Handling of Used Oil

After changing the oil in your motor vehicle:

**1** Pour the used oil into a clean, plastic, reusable container and seal it shut. **Never** mix the motor oil with other materials such as gasoline, fuel oil, paint products, anti-freeze, brake fluid, pesticides, or any other household chemicals. Once motor oil is contaminated with these products, it is nearly impossible to recycle.

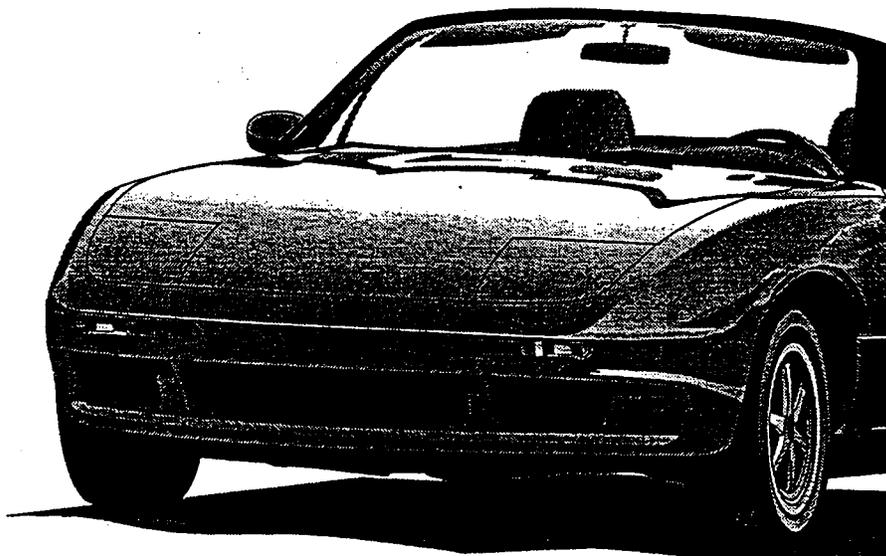
**2** Remove the oil filter, turn upside down, and drain at a 45-degree angle to the oil catchpan overnight. Seal the filter in a plastic zipper bag,

coffee can with lid, or other leak-proof container. Contact your local service stations or scrap dealers for recycling outlets.

Take the container to a used motor oil collection center. Many service stations and other outlets that sell new motor oil allow do-it-yourself oil changers to deposit used oil in their collection tanks. Many communities in Ohio have also begun providing used oil collection in cooperation with a regular curbside recycling program. Others have set up drop-off sites where residents may take small amounts of used oil and deposit it into special containers for recycling. Several commercial outlets,

including ProCare and BP Oil Company's full service stations, Firestone's MasterCare Car Service, and Valvoline Instant Oil Change Centers have accepted used oil from the public. Check your local yellow pages or your local solid waste management district (listed under county government) for other companies that may accept used oil. **Always** call ahead to make sure the local service station will accept your used oil, and to find out if there are any special instructions you need to follow.

**4** After depositing your used oil, take the reusable container home with you to use the next time you change your oil.



### Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

#### Division of Solid and Infectious Waste Management

P. O. Box 1049  
Columbus, Ohio 43216-1049  
(614) 644-2621

#### Public Interest Center

1800 WaterMark Dr.  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-1099  
(614) 644-2160

#### Central District Office

3232 Alum Creek Dr.  
Columbus, Ohio 43207-3417  
(614) 728-3778

#### Northeast District Office

2110 E. Aurora Rd.  
Twinsburg, Ohio 44087  
(216) 425-9171

#### Northwest District Office

347 North Dunbridge Rd.  
Bowling Green, Ohio 43402  
(419) 352-8461

#### Southeast District Office

2195 Front St.  
Logan, Ohio 43138-9031  
(614) 385-8501

#### Southwest District Office

401 East Fifth St.  
Dayton, Ohio 45402-1911  
(513) 285-6357

