

USED OIL AND USED OIL FILTERS IN TEXAS

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Used oil and used oil filters are produced in a wide variety of locations-- homes, independent garages, auto stores, air conditioning repair facilities, metal-working shops, fleet garages, and industrial facilities-- just to name a few.

The characteristics of oil, while very useful for certain activities can prove very detrimental when released to the environment, especially after it has been used. As a result, the Texas Legislature has prohibited the dumping of used oil on land, in sewers, and in waterways. It has also banned used oil and used oil filters from landfills.

But what can you do with used oil and used oil filters in Texas?

Individual citizens who change their own oil can take their used oil and used oil filters to used oil collection centers. Companies, organizations and other entities can also take their used oil (up to 55 gallons at a time) and used oil filters to used oil collection centers. If they have more than 55 gallons, or just choose to, they can make arrangements with a company to specifically manage their used oil. They can also make arrangements for a company to manage their used oil filters.

Either by going through a used oil collection center or some other company, the used oil will make its way to a recycler who will utilize the used oil to make fuel oil, lubricants, re-refined oil, or other petroleum products. The used oil filters can be drained, shredded, crushed, and/or heated to remove the oil. The removed oil is sent to a recycler who can then utilize the oil as described above. The remaining material must be further recycled (e.g., the metal value retrieved and the paper like components used as fuel).

Although used oil collection centers can be found in most Texas counties, they are generally sparsely located in the more rural areas of Texas. This can make limits on aggregation time a problem for both used oil and used oil filters as these rural facilities are not serviced as frequently as their metropolitan counterparts.

Used oil collection centers will generally not charge a fee for accepting the used oil. However, they will likely charge a fee for used oil filters, if they accept them at all.

Why the difference? Market Conditions and Geographic Location.

Companies do not have to pay an Automotive Oil Fee on the new oil they buy if they accept used oil from individuals. Also, depending upon the market price for used oil and transportation costs, they may actually receive some money for the used oil they collect. On the other hand, a market generally does not exist for used oil filters. As a result, the company usually has to pay to have the filters removed. Also, the farther the material has to be transported, the more it costs to recycle.

Table 1 Who Registers With and Reports To the TCEQ?

* Indicates some exceptions may exist.

** Indicates who must re-register every even year if handling oil filters

*** Indicates who must report every even year if transporting used oil filters

Who does what activity must:	Register	Report	Have Financial Insurance (FI), Pollution Liability (PLI), and/or Financial Assurance (FA)*
Individuals (Do It Yourselfers–DIYs) that produces used oil / oil filters	No	No	No
DIYs that transports 55 gallons or less of their own used oil	No	No	No
DIYs that transport more than 55 gallons of their own oil	Yes – only once	No ***	FI; PLI
Entities Other than DIYs (Generators) that produce used oil / oil filters	No	No	No
Generators that transport 55 gallons or less of their company’s used oil	No	No	No
Generators that transport more than 55 gallons of their own used oil	Yes – only once	No ***	FI; PLI
Used Oil Collection Centers (do not have to pay the Automotive Oil Fee on the new oil they buy / offer this service to their customers – usually without a fee	Yes – re-register in odd years	Yes – annually	No
Used Oil Filter Collection Centers (non-subsidized facilities that offer this service to their customers – usually for a fee)	No	No	No
Those who Handle / Manage Used Oil that transport used oil	Yes – only once**	No***	FI; PLI
Those who Handle / Manage Used Oil that store used oil during its shipment for more than 24 hours and less than 35 days (transfer facilities) Note: Oil filters can be stored up to 120 days during shipment	Yes – only once**	No***	FA
Those who Handle / Manage Used Oil that makes a product from the used oil or refines the used oil (<i>used oil processor / re-refiner</i>)	Yes – only once**	Yes – even years	FA
Those who Handle / Manage Used Oil that stores used oil more than 35 days	Yes – only once	Yes – even years	FA
Those who Handle / Manage Used Oil that burns used oil, that does not meet certain specifications, in an industrial furnace, boiler, or hazardous waste incinerator	Yes – only once	No	Yes – RCRA units with waste permits have RCRA FA
Those who Handle / Manage Used Oil that is a used oil marketer	Yes – only once	No	No – if acting solely as a broker