

## Handling Waste Antifreeze Properly

### Introduction:

Did you know...? Waste antifreeze may contain heavy metals such as lead, cadmium, and chromium at levels high enough to make it a regulated hazardous waste. A study by the American Society of Testing and Materials determined that approximately 40% of used antifreeze should be considered hazardous waste due to elevated levels of lead or pH.

The main ingredient of antifreeze is ethylene glycol which is an odorless and sweet-tasting chemical that poses a serious health hazard to humans and animals. A chemical that may be used instead of ethylene glycol is propylene glycol, which is considered less toxic, and labeled non-toxic antifreeze.

### Discussion Points:

- Antifreeze may contain heavy metals
- Antifreeze may be a serious health hazard to humans and animals
- Recycle used antifreeze
- Dispose of contaminated antifreeze properly
- Guidelines and recycling centers are listed on the states' Department of Waste Management website

### Discussion:

Do you know how to store used antifreeze safely? Used antifreeze should be stored in metal or plastic containers and labeled "Antifreeze for Recycling." These containers should have a lid secured tightly and stored on a nonporous concrete surface. Check stored containers for leaks frequently. Spilled antifreeze should be cleaned up immediately.

When draining antifreeze from a vehicle, use a drip pan and funnel. Avoid spilling and do not pour it down the drain or dispose of it in a sanitary sewage and storm drain. Do not pour it outside on the ground as it may pollute groundwater, surface water, or drinking water. Do not combine waste antifreeze with old or used oil or other automotive fluids like brake or transmission fluid; store in separate containers. Tainted antifreeze may contain heavy metals. If it is tainted, it is considered contaminated and cannot be recycled.

Locate a recycling or disposal site. Then call to ask how to contain and document used antifreeze. Guidelines and recycling centers are listed on the states' Department of Waste Management website. Earth 911's Recycling Locator helps find local facilities. On the webpage, click on Where to Recycle. In the left column under Automotive, click on Antifreeze and type your zip code.

As always, stay safe out there!

July 12, 2021

