



Colorado Department  
of Public Health  
and Environment

# AUTO BODY AND AUTO REPAIR SHOPS

## Environmental Regulations



COLORADO  
Pollution Prevention  
PROGRAM

This fact sheet was compiled to highlight some of the common wastes and emissions from auto service shops, and the most significant environmental regulations pertaining to these wastes/emissions. This sheet is merely informational and is not intended to be an exclusive source for the environmental requirements to which auto service shops may be subject.

## Air Emissions

Air Emission Sources. Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are the air pollutants for which body shops are regulated. The main sources of VOCs for body shops are the paints and coatings used and the solvents used for paint gun clean-up. Auto repair shops which do not do body work generally do not emit enough VOCs to be regulated, but are required to capture and recycle CFCs from air conditioning systems.

Filing an APEN. If your shop generates more than 1 ton per year of VOCs in a non-attainment area for ozone (mainly the Denver area) or more than 2 tons per year of VOCs in any other area, you need to file an Air Pollution Emissions Notice (APEN) with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's (CDPHE) Air Pollution Control Division.

To calculate your potential VOC emissions, you need to know how many gallons per year your facility uses for each product containing a significant amount of VOCs, e.g. cleaning solvents. For each of these products you also need to know how many pounds of VOCs per gallon the product contains. The VOC information should be on the SDS or can be obtained from your supplier. Then, for each of these products, you multiply the gallons per year used by the pounds of VOC per gallon, which gives you pounds of VOC per year. You then add the pounds of VOC per year for all of your VOC-containing products to obtain the total pounds of VOC per year for your estimated emissions.

Additional help. If you have not received an APEN form, or if you have any questions about completing this form, you can call the CDPHE Small Business Assistance Program, Nick Melliadis at (303) 692-3175.

## Hazardous Wastes

Typical hazardous wastes for auto body and auto repair shops. For body shops, waste

paint and waste solvents used in paint gun clean-up are the main hazardous wastes generated. Paint filters may also be hazardous wastes, depending on the metals content of the paints used. In addition body shops and auto repair shops may generate waste solvents from parts cleaning and waste fuel which will tend to be hazardous.

Used oil, oil filters, and anti-freeze could be hazardous wastes if not managed properly. Used oil is not a hazardous waste as long as it is picked up by a used oil recycler. Used oil filters are not a hazardous waste if they are drained properly or crushed. Used anti-freeze is not a hazardous waste if it is recycled (preferred option) or if it is discharged to the sewer system (not the storm drain) **with the permission of** the local sewage treatment plant.

Hazardous waste requirements. If you always generate less than 220 pounds of hazardous waste (about half of a 55 gal. drum or less) per month, you are considered a "conditionally exempt small quantity generator" under the federal and state hazardous waste regulations. If you generate between 220 pounds and 2200 pounds per month, you are a "small quantity generator"; and if you generate more than 2200 pounds in any month, you are a generator. The requirements for these three categories of generators are summarized in table 1 of A Small-Business Guide to Hazardous Waste Generator Requirements.

Additional help. If you have any questions about your requirements under the Colorado Hazardous Waste Regulations, you can call the CDPHE Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division at (303) 692-3300.

## Waste Water Discharges

Liquid wastes of concern. These would include used anti-freeze and waste water from washing vehicles, steam cleaning engines, and cleaning the shop floor. Used oil, paint, or solvents should never be put down your drain or otherwise discharged to the sewer system.

Pre-treatment regulations. You should always obtain the permission of your local Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTW) [sewage treatment plant] before discharging any industrial wastes to the sewer system. You may be required to install a sand trap or oil/water separator, or to meet other requirements.

Additional help. For questions about wastewater discharges, call your local POTW or call the CDPHE Water Quality Control Division at (303) 692-3500.

## OSHA Hazard Communication Standard

Businesses are required to provide information about chemical hazards to their employees through labels, Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs), and training. (See the fact sheet on MSDSs in this packet.) If you have questions about these requirements, call OSHA at (800) 755-7090.

*This fact sheet was compiled by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's Pollution Prevention Program.*

*For additional information call Kirk Mills at (303)692-2977*