

Fact Sheet

B-2.4 Off-site Disposal of Hazardous Wastes: Choosing the Right Treatment, Disposal Facility, and Hazardous Waste Hauler

Once waste is generated, small businesses have several choices for waste management. The term “management” refers to the various handling options such as treatment, storage, recycling, or disposal. Waste may be managed on-site, where it was generated, or managed off-site using a contractor. Not only is shipping waste expensive, it can result in large fines and clean up bills if handled improperly.

Choosing a Treatment and Disposal Facility

One of the most important decisions for a small business is who to entrust its hazardous waste to. Before signing a contract with a waste treatment and disposal facility, ask the following questions:

- ! Does the facility have all necessary state and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) permits to handle your particular waste? Does it have an EPA hazardous waste identification number?
- ! Is the facility in violation of any state or federal law (check with the state regulatory agency)?
- ! Does the facility have any current groundwater or soil contamination, and if so, what is being done to correct the situation?
- ! Does the facility test water before it is processed so incompatible wastes are not mixed together?
- ! Will they test your waste post-treatment to ensure that the treatment standards are met?
- ! How long will it take before your waste is processed? Where and how will the waste be stored in the interim?
- ! Is there good security at the site?
- ! How old is the facility and the equipment? Does it look well-maintained?
- ! Are generators in businesses similar to yours satisfied with the facility?

If the treatment and disposal facility requires a signed contract, review it with an attorney and make sure the facility agrees to notify you in the event of:

- ! Regulatory action taken against it.
- ! Legal action started against it.
- ! Change of ownership.
- ! Termination of operation.
- ! Changes in pollution liability insurance coverage.

If possible, try to visit the facility and periodically check up on the facility. This is in the small businesses best interest, since all waste generators who use treatment and disposal facilities are liable, along with the owner and operator, for any damage to the environment caused by the facility.

Choosing a Hazardous Waste Hauler

Who hauls waste from a small business to a treatment and disposal facility is equally important. Hazardous waste haulers have been known to mismanage waste. Before contracting with a hauler, do some background checking on the following information:

- ! Does the transporter have a license to transport hazardous waste in every state that must be traveled through to reach the chosen facility?
- ! Does the transporter offer special services to small quantity generators (SQGs)?
- ! Will the transporter take the waste to the chosen treatment and disposal facility?
- ! Is the transporter in compliance with all state and federal regulations? Was it ever in violation?
- ! Does the hauler serve similar businesses?
- ! How long will the delivery take?
- ! What precautions has the transporter taken to minimize spills or leaks?
- ! What spill control training do the drivers have? What spill control equipment will be on the trucks?
- ! How often will the transporter come to pick up your waste? Is there a minimum quantity?

Cooperate with other waste generators to reduce your shipping and handling costs. Many hazardous waste management facilities will not accept small quantities of waste. Organizing with others to combine waste shipments will improve the chances of finding a reputable hauler and treatment and disposal facility.

One way of reducing waste shipping costs is to set up a “milk run” with other local businesses. If several generators have their waste ready at the same time, the hauler only has to make one trip to collect the waste. The cost of pick-up is split among the generators.

Source:

Managing Your Hazardous Wastes: A Guide for Wisconsin Small Quantity Generators, 3rd ed., Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of Solid & Hazardous Waste Management, PUBL-SW-071 93REV (JG 60 93).