

Waste and Used Auto Fluids

Always read the manufacturers' directions on the label. These directions for use, storage and disposal offer the best advice you can get.

If you have new products you no longer want, give them to someone who can use them. Used materials may have to be disposed of, or better yet, recycled!

Automotive Fluid Hazards

Toxicity

All automotive fluids are poisonous. Because antifreeze tastes good, it is especially dangerous. Huffing agents can kill.

Flammability

Fuels, especially gasoline, are flammable. Diesel and alternative fuels such as methanol or ethanol also can ignite.

Corrosivity

Fluids like battery acid and diesel fuel are very corrosive and can cause chemical burns. All automotive fluids can damage eyes, so wear safety glasses or a face shield.

Reactivity

All fuels can explode. Other liquids when mixed or under pressure also can react violently. Except for oils as discussed in this brochure, never mix auto fluids. Do not store leaking containers.

Recycling Resources

North Dakota Automotive Recyclers Association (NDARA)

P.O. Box 777
Valley City, N.D. 58072
701.845.3080

North Dakota Solid Waste Management Association (NDSWMA)

P.O. Box 3241
Fargo, N.D. 58108-3241
701.298.6944

Additional Information

- Local public health units
- NDSU extension agents
- Tribal waste management officials
- Community public works officials
- USEPA hotline 800.424.9346

For more information about household hazardous waste, contact:



North Dakota Department of Health
P.O. Box 5520
1200 Missouri Ave., Room 302
Bismarck, N.D. 58506-5520
701.328.5166

Or, visit the Department of Health website at:
www.health.state.nd.us

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Automotive Fluids

Use

Storage

Disposal



North Dakota
Department of Health
Division of Waste Management

Using Auto Fluids

Auto fluids generally are safe during use, but there are some safety concerns.

- Check levels and fill with a funnel. Spilling always makes a mess, but spilling flammable liquids on a hot engine can kill.
- Wipe up drips or spills. Don't allow rags or funnels to drip where pets and children can reach. Keep your floor dry to prevent slips.
- Antifreeze is especially dangerous because it tastes good to children and pets. Children like the sweet taste and may eat a lot before adverse symptoms become evident.

Storage

- LOCK your chemicals in a childproof cabinet. Don't store items that are leaking.
- Never mix auto fluids or chemicals.
- Store only in original containers, never in food containers.
- Purchase and store only what you need.
- Keep ignition sources higher than 3 feet off the floor; fuels can ignite!
- Avoid storing chemicals in attached garages or homes where leaks will affect air quality.

Disposal

Gasoline and Other Fuels

Mix old fuels with new fuels and use. Some people create waste fuels when they don't take care of boats, mowers, snowmobiles or motorcycles. Check with used-oil recyclers; they may take old fuels and mix them with used oil.

Fuel-Soaked Rags

Fuel-soaked rags are very flammable; air them out before discarding. Place them outside where pets and children can't reach them, and throw them away when they aren't "stinky."

Used Oil and Oily Fluids

Used oils include brake fluid, power steering fluid and transmission fluid. These oils may be mixed with used motor oil, sometimes called crankcase oil. It is illegal to put used oil into the garbage; however, it's easy to recycle used oil in North Dakota.

Used Oil-Spill Material

Used oil soaked into old carpet and cardboard that was placed under cars, or floor-dry material soaked with used oils can be thrown away. If practical, place in plastic garbage bags and boxes.

Fuel Line Antifreeze

These "propanol" or "iso-propanol" chemicals may be burned in gas without causing harm, even when the temperature is above zero.

Disposal

Antifreeze

Antifreeze comes in two types: the more toxic and harmful "ethylene glycol" and the safer "propylene glycol."

NEVER put antifreeze into a septic tank, storm sewer or lagoon sewer. If you live in a city with a sanitary sewer, call the city wastewater plant for permission to put your antifreeze in the sewer. Try to recycle.

Battery Acid

Normally you won't have to deal with this fluid since it's usually in a sealed case. Sulfuric acid is very strong. Treat it with extreme caution. Also, when "jumping" batteries, remember it's not uncommon for batteries to explode.

Windshield Fluid

Usually blue, but not always, this fluid is toxic and should be disposed of by giving it away to someone who can use it. Ask a neighbor!

Starting Fluids and Deicers

These fluids are extremely flammable. But worse, some are used by teenagers for "huffing." Always keep track of huffing agents.

Vehicle Touch-Up Paint

Dry out the paint and place it in the trash. Dry paint can be discarded safely in landfills.