

Spent Lead Acid Battery Management

Why Regulate Spent Lead Acid Batteries?

In North Carolina, spent lead acid batteries that are sent off site to be reclaimed are not hazardous waste and do not need to be counted in determining the quantity of waste generated per month. However, if improperly handled, the batteries can endanger human health and have devastating effects on the environment. Many sites have been contaminated with lead caused by acid spillage from such batteries. The damage caused by these incidents confirms a need for regulation.

How Are Spent Lead Acid Batteries Regulated in North Carolina?

North Carolina has adopted by reference the federal regulations. Listed below are the general spent lead acid battery requirements and/or recommendations applicable but not limited to vehicle maintenance shops, service stations, retailers, and wholesalers.

For Generators:

- ✓ Not subject to regulation (if reclaimed), therefore, a manifest is not required. Store spent batteries in a manner that prevents leakage of acid or hydrogen gas to the environment.

For Reclaimers:

- ✓ Owners/operators of facilities that store spent batteries before reclaiming are subject to 40 CFR 266.80 as adopted by reference at 15 NCAC 13A .0111, which includes:
 - filing an EPA Form 8700-12, Notification of Regulated Waste Activity;
 - following applicable treatment, storage and disposal facility standards; and
 - following applicable permitting procedures.

Disposal:

- ✓ Spent lead acid batteries that are being disposed and not recycled should be managed as a characteristic hazardous waste due to the acid and lead content (D002, D008) or as a universal waste. They should be disposed of at a permitted hazardous waste facility.

Note: The acid and casings from spent lead acid batteries have been found to contain high lead content and typically must be managed as hazardous waste when disposed.

Management under the Universal Waste Rule:

Lead acid and other batteries can be managed under the Universal Waste Rule. The Universal Waste Rule, adopted by reference at 15A NCAC 13A .0119, became effective in North Carolina in January 1996. Handlers of Universal Wastes are exempt from the requirements of hazardous waste management (40 CFR Parts 262-272). Therefore, universal wastes are not included in determining monthly quantities of hazardous waste generation.