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Selecting a Treatment/Storage/Disposal Facility (TSDF) to Handle Your Hazardous Wastes

Introduction

Many business owners think that once their hazardous waste is hauled away, they have no further responsibility for it. This is not so. Under the RCRA¹ regulations, you (the “generator”) are responsible for your hazardous wastes from “cradle to grave.” This means that your business can be held responsible for a cleanup or pursued in an enforcement action if your hazardous waste is mismanaged by a company, even after it leaves your property.

Therefore, it is important you select a qualified treatment, storage and/or disposal facility (TSDF) to accept your company’s hazardous wastes. This fact sheet provides some general guidelines in selecting a TSDF and the resources available through Ohio EPA to help you in making this important decision.

Permitting Activities and Compliance Record

Any facility that accepts hazardous waste for treatment, storage or disposal must have an Ohio EPA permit for these activities. The permit authorizes the types of waste

¹ Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1976 - provides the framework for EPA’s hazardous waste management program and regulations.

the TSDF can accept and the treatment, storage and/or disposal activities that can be conducted. The permit also outlines the operating conditions and record keeping procedures the TSDF must follow to ensure that wastes will be handled according to EPA regulations. In Ohio, TSDFs are permitted through the Ohio EPA’s Division of Hazardous Waste Management (DHWM).

TSDFs within the state are inspected by Ohio EPA. Commercial facilities (those that receive and process wastes from off-site generators) generally are inspected twice per year. A few larger hazardous waste disposal sites have on-site Ohio EPA inspectors who monitor the daily activities of the facility.

You can access compliance-related information for facilities through several national tracking systems maintained by U.S. EPA:

Envirofacts:

This is a single point of access to several U.S. EPA databases available at www.epa.gov/enviro.

Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO):

ECHO provides integrated compliance and enforcement information for approximately 800,000 regulated facilities nationwide. The site allows you to find facility level inspection, violation, enforcement action and

penalty information for the past two years. Facilities regulated under the Clean Air Act (CAA) Stationary Source Program, Clean Water Act (CWA), National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) are included.

ECHO reports provide a snapshot of a facility’s environmental record, showing dates and types of violations and the state or federal government’s response. ECHO reports also contain demographic information from the national census. You can access ECHO on-line at www.epa.gov/echo.

You can also contact the local Ohio EPA district office for information about a company’s permits and compliance record. The first step is to locate the Ohio EPA district office that oversees the county where the TSDF is located (see map). Then, contact the Division of Hazardous Waste Management in that district office and ask to talk with the person responsible for inspecting the facility.



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Ask your Ohio EPA contact:

- Does the facility have a hazardous waste permit?
- What types of hazardous waste treatment, storage and/or disposal activities are authorized by the permit?
- Is the facility permitted to handle the specific wastes that your business will be sending to them?
- When was the facility last inspected by Ohio EPA?
- What types of problems or violations were found? Has the facility been operating in compliance with its permit conditions?
- If problems or violations were found during past inspections, has the facility corrected these?
- Are there any current enforcement actions against the facility for violations?
- Has the facility recently been penalized for violations?
- Does the facility have financial assurance in accordance with the regulations to ensure that it can properly close or clean up its hazardous waste units?

Because there are many regulations that apply to a TSDF, it is common for these companies to have had some past violations. Paperwork violations and some operating violations may have been found at the company during past inspections

(for example, open drums, incorrect information on inspection logs, manifests, training records). However, a long history of violations may signal poor waste management practices (for example, many spills, emergency incidents, unauthorized treatment/storage/ disposal activities).

Waste Handling Practices

To ensure your hazardous waste will be managed properly, it is important for you to know how the waste will be handled once it gets to the TSDF. Your waste may be handled by more than one facility. For example, your waste may be treated at one location and then shipped off to another site for disposal. If so, you should look at the compliance and operating status of both sites.

Ask the TSDF:

- Can the facility accept the waste you are sending (by EPA waste code)?
- How will the waste be transported to the facility? If this will be arranged by the TSDF, is a licensed hazardous waste transporter used?
- How will the hazardous waste be managed once it gets on site: stored? treated? fuel blended? incinerated? landfilled?
- Will hazardous wastes be handled only in those areas authorized under the facility's permit?

- If wastes are treated, how will any residues from the treatment (for example, incinerator ash, still bottoms, etc.) be handled?
- Will the waste or treatment residues be shipped off to another facility for handling or disposal? If so, how are these wastes managed by the second facility?
- How will you be notified of final disposal of the waste? Will you get something in writing?
- How much time will it take from when the wastes are received at the TSDF until final disposal?
- Does the facility have an environmental compliance manager or an internal auditing program to help monitor its compliance with the regulations?

Bottom Line

Selecting a TSDF that is appropriately permitted to accept/process your waste and that has a good compliance record can help to ensure that your hazardous waste will be handled according to the regulations.

Remember, it's your responsibility to help ensure that your hazardous waste is being properly managed, even after it leaves your property. Know where your hazardous waste is going and make sure it is properly handled from "cradle to grave," to help protect yourself from liability and potential enforcement!

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Is there a list of TSDFs in Ohio that take hazardous waste?

Yes, Ohio EPA's Division of Hazardous Waste Management (DHWM) has a list of the facilities in Ohio permitted to treat, store and/or dispose of hazardous wastes. This list is available through Ohio EPA's Web site at www.epa.state.oh.us/dhwm/pdf/accepting.pdf.

Are there any other considerations in choosing a TSDF?

Information from Ohio EPA's Division of Hazardous Waste Management is related to compliance with the hazardous waste regulations only. This means that you may need to make additional contacts within Ohio EPA to get a complete record of the facility's compliance status. Other areas to consider are compliance with wastewater, air pollution and right-to-know regulations. The Ohio EPA Resource Guide can help you in making contacts in other program areas. It is available on-line at www.epa.state.oh.us/ocapp/sb/publications/resguide.pdf.

Some businesses sending wastes to a TSDF have completed their own on-site audits of the facility beforehand to make sure their wastes will be properly handled. This isn't always feasible though, particularly for small business owners. One alternative is to ask the TSDF for a reference list of other business customers. This will allow you to talk

directly with other businesses about the service received and can help you identify potential problem areas.

What if I'm considering using a TSDF that isn't in Ohio?

If you are considering using a TSDF outside Ohio, that state's environmental agency should have compliance and permitting information available. There is no single contact list for all other state environmental agencies, however, you can start at U.S. EPA's Regional Office Web site to find contact information for other states at www.epa.gov/epahome/locate2.htm.

Where can I get more help?

If you have questions or need help in understanding Ohio EPA's regulations, you can also contact Ohio EPA's Office of Compliance Assistance and Pollution Prevention (OCAPP) for help. OCAPP is a non-regulatory office of Ohio EPA with a goal of helping small businesses comply with environmental regulations and permitting requirements. If you are operating a small business with fewer than 100 employees, we can help you! For more information, contact OCAPP at (800) 329-7518, or visit our Web site at www.epa.state.oh.us/ocapp/sb.

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District Offices



Toll-free numbers are for citizens with questions or concerns about environmental issues. The regulated community should use the business line for routine business. Spills and emergencies should be reported to (800) 282-9378.

CDO Central District Office
50 W. Town St. Suite 700
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 728-3778
(614) 728-3898 Fax
(800) 686-2330
www.epa.state.oh.us/cdo

NWDO Northwest District Office
347 N. Dunbridge Rd.
Bowling Green, OH 43402
(419) 352-8461
(419) 352-8468 Fax
(800) 686-6930
www.epa.state.oh.us/nwdo

SEDO Southeast District Office
2195 Front St.
Logan, OH 43138
(740) 385-8501
(740) 3856490 Fax
(800) 686-7330
www.epa.state.oh.us/sedo

NEDO Northeast District Office
2110 E. Auroa Rd.
Twinsburg, OH 44087
(330) 963-1200
(330) 487-0769 Fax
(800) 686-6330
www.epa.state.oh.us/nedo

SWDO Southwest District Office
401 E. Fifth St.
Dayton, OH 45402-6357
(937) 285-6357
(937) 285-6249 Fax
(800) 686-6357
<http://swdoweb.epa.state.oh.us>