



Universal Waste

THIS POLICY DOES NOT HAVE THE FORCE OF LAW

Hazardous Waste Program

*Universal wastes (UW) are specific hazardous waste streams that a generator can choose to manage in an alternative manner in place of the more complex hazardous waste requirements. These wastes are generated by numerous businesses, typically in small quantities. The Universal Waste Rules (UWR) are intended to promote recycling as well as proper disposal by easing certain regulatory requirements. Ohio's UWRs are located in Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) Chapter **3745-273**.*

A waste must be a hazardous waste before it can be a universal waste. If a hazardous waste stream is not managed as a universal waste, then the waste must be managed as a hazardous waste under the applicable hazardous waste regulations.

*On October 23, 2022, Ohio EPA's new regulations for hazardous waste aerosol cans became effective. Previously, aerosol cans could be managed as an Ohio-specific universal waste under OAC rule **3745-273-89**. Now, in accordance with U.S. EPA's addition of the management of aerosol cans as a universal waste, non-empty hazardous waste aerosol cans can be managed as a universal waste under OAC rule **3745-273-06**.*

Types of Universal Waste

Listed below are four categories of UW that may be managed under the UWR. In addition to the categories discussed below, Ohio has adopted other **Ohio-Specific universal wastes** which can be found on the [universal waste web page](#).

Lamps

This category includes hazardous waste lamps that meet the definition in OAC rule **3745-50-10**. Lamps are defined as the bulb or tube portion of an electric lighting device. A lamp is designed to produce radiant energy, most often in the ultraviolet, visible, and infra-red regions of the electromagnetic spectrum. Lamps can exhibit the toxicity characteristic for some heavy metals (i.e., mercury, lead, cadmium). Examples of universal waste lamps include incandescent, fluorescent, high intensity discharge, neon, mercury vapor, high pressure sodium and metal halide lamps.

Pesticides

This category includes hazardous waste pesticides that are either suspended and/or recalled under Section 6 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (**FIFRA**), suspended or cancelled as part of a voluntary recall by the registrant or collected in waste pesticide programs.

NOTE: For more information on Ohio's waste pesticide collection programs, contact the Ohio Department of Agriculture's Division of Plant Health -Pesticide Regulation at 800-282-1955.

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Mercury-Containing Equipment (MCE)

MCE means a device or part of a device (excluding batteries and lamps) that contains elemental mercury integral to its function. Some commonly recognized devices are thermostats, barometers, manometers, temperature and pressure gauges, and mercury switches, such as light switches in automobiles.

This definition does not include mercury waste that is generated as a by-product through the process of manufacturing or treatment, or equipment that has been contaminated by mercury.

Discarded Batteries

This category includes hazardous waste batteries such as nickel-cadmium batteries and spent lead-acid batteries. The handler has the option of managing discarded lead-acid batteries under OAC Chapter **3745-273** (the UWR), or OAC rule **3745-266-80**. UW batteries are defined in OAC rule **3745-50-10** and OAC rule **3745-273-09** as devices consisting of one or more electrically connected electrochemical cells that are designed to receive, store and deliver electric energy. An electrochemical cell consists of an anode, cathode and electrolyte. A device is also considered a battery if it is intact, unbroken and all of the electrolyte has been removed.

Aerosol Cans

This category includes hazardous waste aerosol cans that meet the definition in OAC rule **3745-273-09(A)(1)**. Universal waste aerosol cans are defined as a non-refillable receptacle containing a gas, compressed, liquified, or dissolved under pressure, for the sole purpose of which is to expel a liquid, paste, or powder and fitted with a self-closing release device allowing the contents to be ejected by the gas. Aerosol cans can be managed as universal waste under OAC rule **3745-273-13(E)** for Small Quantity Handlers of Universal Waste or, for Large Quantity Handlers of Universal Waste, OAC rule **3745-273-33(E)**. If not managed as universal waste, aerosol cans must be managed under the **Hazardous Waste rules**.

Universal Waste Requirements:

There are three categories that a facility or a person handling UW can fall under: handlers, transporters, and destination facilities. The rules that each must follow depend on what is done with the UW.

Handlers:

UW handlers can include persons who generate UW and persons who receive and store universal wastes generated by someone else.

Under Ohio's hazardous waste rules, a person who receives and stores hazardous waste from others (generators) is required to have a storage permit.

The UWR allows these persons to accept and store UW from off-site without having to obtain a storage permit. So, in effect, simple storage without waste manipulation does not require a permit. Generators of UW who want to take advantage of the UWR instead of the hazardous waste generator requirements must comply with all UW handler requirements. A UW handler cannot treat, dispose of, or recycle UW and thus does not need a hazardous waste installation and operation permit.

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UW handlers are classified as small or large UW handlers based on the quantity of UW accumulated at any time. Generators and others receiving and storing UW fall under two categories:

- **small quantity handlers** (accumulate less than 5,000 kilograms [11,023 pounds] of UW [not by type] at any time), or
- **large quantity handlers** (accumulate more than 5,000 kilograms [11,023 pounds] of UW [not by type] at any time).

If a small quantity UW handler accumulates more than 5,000 kilograms of UW on-site at any time, they must comply with the large quantity UW handler requirements for the remainder of the calendar year.

All generators have the option of handling their UW under the UWR or under Ohio's generator requirements found in OAC Chapter **3745-52**. Other handlers do not have this option.

Note: UW should not be counted when making quantity determinations for hazardous waste generator categories (i.e., very small quantity generators (VSQGs), small quantity generators (SQGs) and large quantity generators (LQGs)). Universal waste handler categories should not be confused with the hazardous waste generator categories.

Transporters:

This person engages in the off-site transfer of UW by air, rail, highway, or water and must comply with all applicable **DOT** regulations. UW transporters may transport UW from one UW handler to one another, to UW destination facilities or to foreign destinations. Shipments of UW for export must conform to U.S. EPA's "Acknowledgment of Consent." UW handlers may act as their own transporter as long as they comply with the UW transporter requirements in OAC rules **3745-273-50 through 3745-273-56**.

A UW transporter is prohibited from disposing, diluting or treating UW except when responding to a release. A UW transporter must respond to releases of UW during transit.

Destination Facilities:

A destination facility is defined in OAC rule **3745-273-09(B)** as a facility that treats, disposes of, or recycles a particular category of UW. The owner/operator of a destination facility receives UW from transporters and handlers. If storage of the UW is necessary prior to recycling, then the destination facility must have a hazardous waste installation and operation permit. If the destination facility conducts recycling without storage, they must comply with OAC rule **3745-51-06(C)(2)**.

Note: Ohio EPA maintains a list of **recyclers** on our website.

The link to the Web page displays a drop-down list. It begins with Antifreeze but it also has numerous categories of recyclers by clicking on this drop down box.

Proper Management for Handlers

Lamps:

Small and large quantity handlers of lamps shall contain any lamp in containers, cabinets, or packages that are structurally sound, adequate to prevent breakage, and compatible with the contents of the lamps. Such containers, cabinets, and packages shall remain closed and shall lack evidence of leakage, spillage, or damage that could cause leakage under reasonably foreseeable conditions. Small and large quantity UW handlers are prohibited from crushing their lamps under the UWR. Crushing of spent lamps is considered treatment of a hazardous waste and is subject to the hazardous waste regulations. If they exhibit a characteristic of a hazardous waste, crushed lamps must be managed as a hazardous waste. Generators of lamps have the option of handling their lamps on-site under the hazardous waste generator requirements of OAC Chapter **3745-52**. Generators may crush their lamps if they comply

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with all applicable generator treatment requirements in OAC rule [3745-52-17](#) and send them directly to a *permitted hazardous waste facility*. A handler who is not the generator of the lamps cannot crush the lamps.

[Hazardous Waste Treatment, Storage and Disposal Facilities \(ohio.gov\)](#)

Pesticides:

Small and large quantity UW handlers must manage pesticides in containers that remain closed, are structurally sound, compatible with the pesticide, and lack evidence of leakage, spillage, or damage that could result in a spill. Pesticides managed in a container not meeting these conditions must be over-packed in a structurally sound container. Tanks that are used for managing pesticides classified as UW must comply with the hazardous waste tank requirements in OAC Chapter [3745-66](#).

Handlers must use transport vehicles or vessels that are closed, structurally sound, compatible with the pesticide and lack evidence of leakage, spillage or damage that could cause leakage under reasonably foreseeable conditions.

Mercury-Containing Equipment (MCEs):

Small and large quantity handlers may remove ampules from UW MCEs provided that:

- the ampules are removed in a manner designed to prevent breakage;
- the ampules are removed only over or in a containment device (tray or pan sufficient to contain any mercury released from an ampule in case of breakage);
- a mercury clean-up system is available to immediately transfer any mercury resulting from spills or leaks from broken ampules, from the containment device to a container;
- any mercury resulting from spills or leaks is immediately transferred from the containment device into non-leaking containers. The containers must be in good condition and closed upon placement of the spill material;
- the area in which ampules are removed is well-ventilated and monitored to ensure compliance with all applicable OSHA exposure levels for mercury;
- the employees removing ampules are thoroughly familiar with proper waste mercury handling and emergency procedures, including transfer of mercury from containment devices to appropriate containers;
- removed ampules are stored in closed, non-leaking containers that are in good condition; and
- removed ampules are packed in a container with packing materials adequate to prevent breakage during storage, handling and transportation.

Please see our [Mercury-Containing Equipment](#) guidance document for more information.

Discarded Batteries:

Small and large quantity UW handlers have two provisions for managing batteries as UW:

- Any batteries that show evidence of leakage, spillage or damage that could cause leakage must be containerized. The container must be closed, structurally sound, compatible with the contents of the battery and lack evidence of leakage or spillage.
- Handlers are allowed to conduct certain activities associated with battery management under the UWR including:
 - sort batteries by type;
 - mix types in containers;
 - discharge batteries to remove the electric charge;
 - regenerate batteries;

Note: Any waste (e.g., electrolytes) removed from batteries must be evaluated to determine whether it is a hazardous waste. Hazardous waste removed from the batteries must be managed in accordance with OAC Chapter [3745-52](#).

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- disassemble batteries or battery packs into individual batteries;
- remove electrolyte; and
- remove batteries from discarded consumer products.

Aerosol Cans:

Small and large quantity handlers of aerosol cans shall manage cans in a way that prevents releases to the environment. UW aerosol cans shall be accumulated in a container that is structurally sound, lacks evidence of leakage, spillage, or damage that could cause leakage under reasonably foreseeable conditions. Said containers should also be protected from any heat source. If universal waste aerosol cans do show evidence of leakage, they should be packaged in a separate closed container, over-packed with absorbents, or immediately punctured and drained. If the contents drained from the universal waste aerosol can consist solely of paint, they can be managed as an Ohio-Specific universal waste under OAC [3745-273-89](#).

Small and large quantity handlers of universal waste may conduct the following activities, so long as each aerosol can remains intact and un-breached:

- sorting aerosol cans by type;
- mixing intact cans in one container;
- removing actuators to reduce the risk of accidental release.

Universal waste handlers may puncture and drain their universal waste aerosol cans, provided the following criteria are met:

- puncturing and draining activities are conducted using a device specifically designed to safely puncture aerosol cans and effectively contain the residual contents and emissions;
- establish and follow a written procedure that outlines the following:
 - how to safely puncture and drain universal waste aerosol cans;
 - proper assembly, operation, and maintenance of the unit;
 - segregation of incompatible wastes;
 - proper waste management practices to prevent fires or releases to the environment;
- maintain an on-site copy of the manufacturer's specification and instructions and ensure employees operating the device are trained in the proper procedures;
- ensure puncturing is done in a manner to prevent fires and the release of a universal waste component to the environment (i.e., locating the equipment on a solid, flat surface in a well-ventilated area);
- immediately transfer the contents from the waste aerosol can or puncturing device to a container or tank that meets the applicable requirements of [OAC rules 3745-52-14 through 3745-52-17](#);
- conduct a hazardous waste determination (OAC [3745-52-11](#)) on the contents of the aerosol can;
- keep a written procedure in place in the event of a spill or leak;
- promptly clean-up spills or leaks with the spill clean-up kit provided by the facility.

Note: Any HW generated as a result of puncturing and draining UW aerosol cans is subject to all applicable requirements of OAC Chapters 3745-50 to 3745-69, 3745-205, 3745-256, and 3745-266. The UW handler is considered the generator and is subject to OAC Chapter 3745-52.

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Notification

Small quantity handlers of UW and UW transporters are not required to notify Ohio EPA of their UW activities and are not required to obtain an EPA hazardous waste ID number. Large quantity UW handlers must *notify Ohio EPA* in writing and obtain an EPA hazardous waste *ID number* prior to exceeding the 5,000 kg storage limit. A large quantity UW handler who previously notified Ohio EPA of their hazardous waste activities and received an EPA identification number is not required to renotify. For specific details on the notification requirements, see OAC rule [3745-273-32](#).

Note: UW handlers who are accumulating recalled pesticides only and have notified U.S. EPA under the Federal Fungicide, Insecticide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) are not required to renotify again under the UWR.

Permitting

Small and large quantity UW handlers and transporters **are not** required to have a hazardous waste installation and operation permit provided they comply with all applicable universal waste rules. Destination facilities **are** required to have a hazardous waste installation and operation permit for storage of the waste prior to recycling. The recycling process itself is not subject to Ohio's hazardous waste regulations. A facility that collects and stores UW and sends it to a recycler, such as a broker, would not require a permit to operate since the activity is regulated as a handler of UW. If the destination facility conducts recycling without storage, it must comply with OAC rule [3745-51-06\(C\)\(2\)](#).

The *permitting process* is very involved. When a facility applies for a hazardous waste permit it becomes subject to *corrective action, closure* and *financial assurance* requirements. For more information on the permitting process, see OAC Chapter [3745-50](#) or contact our permitting staff at 614-644-2924.

Packaging & Labeling

The labeling requirements are identical for small and large quantity UW handlers. Each UW container must be marked, as appropriate, with the words "Universal Waste Lamps," "Universal Waste Battery(ies)," "Universal Waste Thermostat(s)," "Universal Waste Pesticide(s)," or "Universal Waste Aerosol Can(s)." The following phrases are also acceptable: "Waste Lamp(s)," "Used Lamp(s)," "Waste Battery(ies)," "Used Battery(ies)," "Waste Thermostat(s)," "Used Thermostat(s)," "Waste Pesticide(s)," "Used Pesticide(s)," "Waste Aerosol Can(s)," or "Used Aerosol Can(s)."

Storage Time Limits

The handler must also be able to demonstrate the accumulation time for all universal wastes. Accumulation time begins the date the material became a waste or is received. The handler may make this determination by:

- placing the UW in a container and marking or labeling the container with the earliest date that any UW in the container became a waste or was received;
- marking or labeling the individual item of UW (i.e., each battery or thermostat) with the date it became a waste or was received;
- maintaining an inventory system on-site that identifies the date the UW being accumulated became a waste or was received;
- maintaining an inventory system on-site that identifies the earliest date that any UW in a group of UW items or a group of containers of UW became a waste or was received;
- placing the UW in a specific accumulation area and identifying the earliest date that any UW in the area became a waste or was received; or
- any other method which clearly demonstrates the length of time that the UW has been accumulated from the date it became a waste or was received.

Small and large quantity UW handlers may store their UW on-site for up to one year from the time it was generated or received from off-site. If accumulation for greater than one year is required, the handler must be able to prove that the accumulation is necessary in order to facilitate proper recovery, treatment, or disposal.

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UW transporters may store UW during the normal course of transportation at a universal waste transfer facility (includes loading docks, parking areas, storage areas, and other similar areas where shipments of UW are held) for 10 days or less. If a UW transporter stores UW for more than 10 days, the transporter becomes a UW handler and must comply with all applicable requirements of the UWR.

Contact

For more information, contact the Hazardous Waste Compliance Assurance Section of the *Division of Environmental Response and Revitalization* at 614-644-2924.

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Universal Waste Handler Requirements

Handler Requirements	Universal Waste Handler Categories			
	<u>Small Quantity Handlers</u>	<u>Large Quantity Handlers</u>	<u>Transporters</u>	<u>Destination Facilities</u>
Notification 3745-273-12 3745-273-32	Not required to notify 3745-273-12	<u>Notify Ohio EPA</u> in writing and obtain an <u>EPA Identification Number</u> 3745-273-32	No applicable requirement	Must comply with all applicable requirements in OAC Chapters 3745-50 through 3745-270
Packaging 3745-273-13 3745-273-33 49 CRF 171 to 180	Containers must meet the requirements in 3745-273-13	Containers must meet the requirements in 3745-273-33	Must comply with all applicable US DOT regulations in 49 CRF 171 to 180	Must comply with all applicable requirements in OAC Chapters 3745-50 through 3745-270
Labeling/Marking 3745-273-14 3745-273-18 3745-273-34 3745-273-38 49 CRF 171 to 180	Must meet requirements specified in 3745-273-14 and 3745-273-18	Must meet requirements specified in 3745-273-34 and 3745-273-38	Must comply with all applicable US DOT regulations in 49 CRF 171 to 180	Must comply with all applicable requirements in OAC Chapters 3745-50 through 3745-270
Storage Time Limits 3745-273-15 3745-273-35 3745-273-53	Up to one year from date generated or received 3745-273-15	Up to one year from date generated or received 3745-273-35	10 days or less at universal waste transfer facility 3745-273-53	Must comply with all applicable requirements in OAC Chapters 3745-50 through 3745-270
Record Keeping / Manifesting 3745-273-19 3745-273-39	Records not required 3745-273-19	Retain receipts of all shipments for at least three years 3745-273-39	No applicable requirement	Must comply with all applicable requirements in OAC Chapters 3745-50 through 3745-270
Employee Training 3745-273-16 3745-273-36	Training required 3745-273-16	Training required 3745-273-36	No applicable requirement	Must comply with all applicable requirements in OAC Chapters 3745-50 through 3745-270
Response To Releases 3745-273-17 3745-273-37 3745-273-54	Must comply with 3745-273-17	Must comply with 3745-273-37	Must comply with 3745-273-54	Must comply with all applicable requirements in OAC Chapters 3745-50 through 3745-270
Permitting 3745-273-60	No applicable requirement	No applicable requirement	No applicable requirement	Must comply with all applicable requirements in OAC Chapters 3745-50 through 3745-270