

Wisconsin residents now need to recycle used oil filters

“Each year, Wisconsinites throw away an estimated 187,000 gallons of oil in used oil filters and 1.6 million gallons of oil in oil absorbents,” says Jack Connelly, solid waste program coordinator for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources waste and materials management program. “Oil is a valuable, reusable material. By recycling filters and absorbent material, used oil can be extracted and reused.”

A new law bans the disposal of used automotive oil filters and oil absorbent materials in landfills in Wisconsin as of January 1, 2011. The ban covers everyone in the state, including homeowners, farmers, businesses, industrial operations, and others.

The oil filters and absorbents ban is intended to keep these materials out of Wisconsin landfills and out of the landfill leachate that is collected from landfills and often treated at municipal wastewater treatment facilities.

Filters also contain steel components that can be recycled. Recycling the approximately nine million filters that currently enter the landfill will save more than 4.5 million pounds of steel for reuse.

Recycling options for oil filters and oil absorbent materials are available throughout the state. Many businesses that perform oil changes will accept used oil filters. Some communities allow used oil and oil filters to be collected at their waste transfer stations or at specific collection sites.

In Waushara County, used oil filters are being accepted at the County Parks & Solid Waste office during regular office hours (Winter Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.). There is a charge of 50 cents for filters up to 6". Those filters over 6" tall will cost \$1.00 each. Waste oil is accepted at any of the nine solid waste collection sites (Wednesday 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.) at no cost. Some area service stations also accept waste items from automotive do-it-yourselfers, often for a small fee.

For more information concerning the new used oil filter and oil absorbent landfill bans or other solid waste issues, call the Waushara County Solid Waste office at (920) 787-7037.