

# Here Are Types Of Garbage Banned In Minnesota—Plus Tips on What to Do

By Tom Johnson  
Hole Notes Editor

The fall edition of *Environmental Update*, the Washington County Department of Health, Environment and Land Management's newsletter, discusses waste reduction at home and work. The State of Minnesota has banned certain types of garbage that we should be aware of. They have done this to help protect the environment. Included in this are:

**Lead Acid Batteries:** Return to a retailer that sells lead acid batteries.

**Motor Oil:** Take to a service station or garage that accepts used motor oil, or to the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Facility. Call 612/430-6655 if you would like a list of outlets for used motor oil.

**Brake Fluid, Power Steering Fluid, Transmission Fluid:** Bring to the HHW Facility.

**Fluorescent and High Intensity Discharge Lamps:** Take to the HHW Facility.

**Rechargeable Batteries:** Take to the HHW Facility or to your local Radio Shack.

**Mercury Containing Products:** (thermostats, thermometers, mercuric oxide batteries): Take to the HHW Facility. Call Honeywell at 1-800-345-6770, ext. 733 for information on disposal of thermostats.

**Used Oil Filters:** Effective January 1, 1995 oil filters are banned. Take them to the HHW Facility.

These materials are illegal to throw away, and it is every citizen's responsibility to do his or her part in reducing the toxicity of the garbage by disposing of hazardous waste properly.

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## Garbage —

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Along with waste reduction comes recycling. It's also everyone's responsibility to do both and, certainly from an economic standpoint, managing your trash can reduce your costs. Reducing the amount of waste can help eliminate some of the need for recycling. Supply and demand for recyclable materials are linked like any other commodity. Manufacturers need to feel confident that there will be enough raw material to justify the expense to process recyclables into usable forms.

We as consumers can buy products that are made from or packaged in recycled materials. Without markets for recyclable materials, they will be stockpiled or illegally dumped and, besides being a waste, there is potentially a negative impact on the environment. Part of the problem for the consumer is the confusion in what to put in what recycling container. Why are there several plastic bottles that hold the same type of product but are made out of different resins? (type 1, 2 & 3). They don't mix, so one has to sort plastics carefully when recycling.

**There has been a great deal of progress** in the packaging of pesticides, but there is room for improvement. Instead of triple-rinsing one gallon containers or even 2½ gallon containers, have a returnable container in a larger size more readily available? If your operation can handle it, buy the 1,000-lb. bags of fertilizer or get it bulk. It's cheaper and reduces waste. Our industry is unique in that on the golf course we recycle everything we produce.

Here are some tips from *Environmental Update* on how to reduce waste at the work place:

- Use reusable mugs and lunch containers;
- Post memos and announcements on a bulletin board instead of distributing individual copies;
- Eliminate unnecessary forms, reports and publications to reduce the number that end up being thrown away;
- Establish an employee suggestion program with a waste reduction category;
- Use 2-sided copying whenever possible;
- Replace paper towels in rest rooms with cloth towels or air dryers (cloth tee towels?)

We could add to that list—composting, mulching, calibrate spreaders and spray equipment often, follow label rates and don't over-water.

For more information or if you have any questions on recycling or waste reduction, call 612-430-6655 or your county solid waste office.

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