

Wisconsin residents now need to recycle used oil filters

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MADISON -- “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.

People should contact their local recycling program for more information. To find other recycling options in your community, see the [Wisconsin Recycling Markets Directory](#) (exit DNR; to find oil filters recyclers, select the “Motor Vehicle Items” category and select oil filters. To find oil absorbent recyclers, select the “Other Materials” category and select oil absorbents) on the University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Solid and Hazardous Waste Education website.

Used filters may also be used as a fuel supplement in an approved municipal solid waste combustor. Oil absorbent materials may be taken to an approved biopile at a landfill, used as a fuel supplement in an approved municipal solid waste combustor, or recycled.

More information on the ban, including more information on what the ban covers is available in a [oil filter and absorbent recycling media kit](#) on the DNR website.

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