

Used Oil Facts

Used Oil Recycling

If the purchase of a used oil-fired furnace isn't an attractive option, used oil recycling offers another alternative to properly managing used oil. **Used oil is one of the few wastes that allows a consumer to 'close the loop' since it can be re-refined into the same product again and again⁽¹⁾.**

As a small business owner in Iowa, there are a couple of options for used oil recycling. The easiest option is to **hire a used oil recycling service**. Used oil recyclers are easy to locate these days and many will pay a nominal amount per gallon for used oil or provide free pick up. Used oil recyclers are considered 'marketers' of used oil. They are responsible for testing the used oil they collect for hazardous contaminants before they sell it to someone else. (If your business sells used oil directly to a burner of used oil, such as another business, they or you need to perform the testing.) Used oil marketers sell used oil to various industries such as asphalt plants or industrial burners. **Used oil from Iowa may actually end up in one of the few used oil re-refining plants in the United States since there is one located in Illinois.**

Used oil re-refining takes used oil through a process that produces very little waste and generates oil that is as good or better than virgin oil. In fact, producing one gallon of re-refined oil base stock requires less energy than it does to produce a gallon of base stock from crude. **Recycling used oil and purchasing re-refined oil is the perfect example of closed loop recycling⁽²⁾.**

All used oil recycling will incur costs in the form of air pollution from transportation. Mobile sources of air pollution include cars and trucks. Whether the vehicle runs on gasoline or diesel fuel, mobile air emissions are a big concern. Diesel engines are one of the largest sources of fine particulate matter.

Nationwide, particulate matter, especially the



fine particles produced by diesel engines are thought to cause at least 15,000 deaths a year. Diesel exhaust also contributes to smog, acid rain and global climate change⁽³⁾. Gasoline engines also produce air pollutants. The average light truck will produce approximately 108 pounds of hydrocarbons, 854 pounds of carbon monoxide, 56 pounds of nitrogen oxides and 16,035 pounds of carbon dioxide annually⁽⁴⁾.

References

- (1) Silverspot Consulting, silverspot@optonline.net
- (2) California Integrated Waste Management Board, Used Oil Recycling Program. <http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/UsedOil/Rerefined/>
- (3) United States Environmental Protection Agency (2002). Diesel Exhaust in the United States.
- (4) United States Environmental Protection Agency (2000). Average Annual Emissions and Fuel Consumption from Passenger Cars and Light Trucks.