



Key Practices for Small Businesses with Regulated Waste

Minnesota Technical Assistance Program ■ FACT SHEET

Keep your business competitive, save money and comply with environmental regulations by using the following tips. They are designed to help you evaluate current practices, increase efficiency and improve waste reduction at your shop.

Organize the Shop

Keep a well organized layout. All materials and equipment should be accessible and ready to function. A clean, organized appearance is important to your shop's image. It can greatly affect customer impressions and word-of-mouth referrals. Try using the five S's. Developed in Japan, the five S's—each S is a Japanese word—are components that will help you keep your business clean all of the time.

1. Organization (seiri)

Remove unnecessary items from the workplace and develop a system to prevent future accumulation.

2. Order (seiton)

Maximize efficiency by creating functional storage systems so employees can find what they need when they need it.

3. Cleanliness (seiso)

Maintain a clean workplace by picking up trash, sweeping floors and cleaning machines. Develop a five-minute daily cleanup routine. Give each employee a specific task to carry out in this time.

4. Standardized Cleanup/Neatness (seiketsu)

Keep the shop and equipment clean. Prevent things from getting dirty in the first place to minimize the need to clean. Machinery that leak fluids should be repaired.

5. Conduct (shitsuke)

Train employees to maintain cleanliness standards.

For more information about the five S's see the article, "Getting Clean, as Much Fun as Getting Dirty," online at mntap.umn.edu/source/14-3/src2-s99.htm.

Organize the Records

Keep track of inventory to help plan for purchases and avoid redundant products and overstocking. Record keeping allows you to track shelf-life limits and can reduce employee time spent restocking.

Businesses generating hazardous waste are required to keep records. These records can prove that you are complying with environmental laws and help protect against liability. Track and maintain documents related to employee training, material safety data sheets (MSDSs), waste shipping, waste evaluations, and licensing and permit records. When documents are well-organized, regulatory inspections can take less of your time.

To keep its waste-related files in order, the John Roberts Company, a commercial printer in Coon Rapids, developed a filing system. Check your system against the file titles on page three of this fact sheet, which were based on John Roberts' system. Cut out any applicable file titles that your system is missing and insert them into your hanging file folders or three-ring binders. The titles listed in bold indicate a category grouping.

Train Employees

New employees need training and seasoned employees improve with retraining. Even the most experienced employees are never done learning. Work performance and efficiency can be improved with new ideas and technologies. Go beyond health and safety requirements by providing complete and clear instructions on new waste reduction tasks and standard procedures. Routinely encourage employees to contribute ideas for improving work practices and reducing waste.

Label All Materials and Containers

Proper identification of inventory and waste reduces the chance for mistakes that waste costly supplies.

Inventory consolidated or transferred into smaller containers should be labeled. Information about the contents of waste containers is required. When a container is empty, remove the label and recycle the container, or relabel and reuse it.

Avoid Spills

Use funnels and spigots to limit spills. Avoid filling large transfer containers too full. Heavy containers are hard to safely move. Have a procedure in place for cleaning up spills to recover as much material as possible for reuse. Dust pans with squeegees work well with both liquid and solid spills. Use absorbents as a last step in spill cleanup and use them sparingly. Remember, absorbents are expensive and add cost and volume to proper waste disposal.

Be Open to Change

New products and technologies are constantly emerging for small businesses. For example, to improve cleaning and lengthen bath life, partswashers now include filtering and oil/cleaner separation techniques. Heated aqueous cleaners now compete effectively with petroleum solvents. Money can also be saved by changing routines. For example, by stretching your partswashing changeout schedule from eight to 10 weeks, you can reduce annual waste by 20 percent.

Finding new uses or reuse opportunities, conserving supplies, or eliminating duplicate supplies will influence disposal costs. Because you have less waste your usually full Dumpster may only be half full on collection day. Change your pickup schedule and build on your success.

Additional Resources

For more information about record keeping see the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) fact sheet, "Step 10: Keep Records" available at <www.pca.state.mn.us/waste/pubs/1-10.pdf>.

The MPCA's Small Business Assistance Program <www.pca.state.mn.us/programs/sbap_p.html> can provide free, nonregulatory, confidential environmental assistance on how to properly manage waste and meet regulations.

The Minnesota Department of Labor & Industry's Workplace Safety Consultation <www.doli.state.mn.us/wsc.html> provides free, on-site assistance to improve employer's safety and health record, lower accident costs and reduce Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MNOSHA) citations and penalties.

For More Information

MnTAP has a variety of technical assistance services available to help Minnesota businesses implement industry-tailored solutions that maximize resource efficiency, prevent pollution and reduce costs. Our information resources are available online at <mntap.umn.edu>. Or, call MnTAP at 612/624-1300 or 800/247-0015 from greater Minnesota for personal assistance.

Organize Your Files

Department of Transportation (DOT)
Closed Manifests
HazMat Training Records
Minimal Generator Shipments
Open Manifests
Shipping Papers
Very Small Quantity Generator Shipments
Licenses and Fees
Air Emissions Fees
EPA Identification Number
Hazardous Waste Fees
Hazardous Waste License
Pollution Prevention Fees
Solid Waste Fees
Wastewater Fees
Occupational Safety/Health OSHA
Employee Right to Know
Ergonomics
Forktruck Monitoring/Training
Material Safety Data Sheets
Minnesota AWAIR
OSHA Employee Training Records
OSHA Inspections
OSHA Lockout
OSHA Posters
Workers Compensation
Permits and Applications
Air Emissions Application
Local Permits
Solid Waste Permit
Storage Tank Registration
Stormwater Permit
Wastewater Permit

Regulated Waste Data
Air Emissions Tracking
Annual Pollution Prevention Report
Biennial Hazwaste Reports
Community Right to Know
Contingency/Emergency Plan
Employee Air Conditioning Certification/Training Records
Fluorescent Lamp Recycling
Hazardous Waste Training Records
Lead-acid Battery Recycling
Non-hazardous Recycling
Solvent Recycling
Solvent Waste Profile
Storage Tank Inventory Record Keeping
TCLP Tests
Universal Wastes
Used Oil Filter Receipts
Used Oil/Oily Waste Receipts
Waste Profiles
Waste Storage Area Inspections
Wastewater
Wastewater Test Reports
Miscellaneous
Emergency Equipment
Fire Department Inspections
Fire Extinguisher Inspections
First Aid
Indoor Air Quality
Local, County, State Inspections
Office Waste Recycling
Safety Shoes/Equipment
Spills Cleanup
Sprinkler Inspections