



Managing E-Cigarette Waste

Waste from e-cigarettes (vapes or vaping devices) often contains nicotine and batteries which can pose a threat to human health and the environment. Idaho adopts the federal hazardous waste (HW) regulations (40 CFR parts 124, 260-266, 268, 270, 273, and 279) into state rules (IDAPA 58.01.05). These regulations require owners and operators of facilities that generate waste to determine whether or not wastes are hazardous and manage them accordingly. This fact sheet explains how to properly handle, store, and dispose of e-cigarette waste.

Nicotine Waste

Nicotine is a listed, acute hazardous waste, which carries the waste code P075. An acute hazardous waste is defined as hazardous waste that is fatal to humans in low doses, has demonstrated toxicity to test subjects, or is otherwise capable of causing or significantly contributing to an increase in serious, irreversible, or incapacitating reversible illness.

Safe Handling

Use caution when handling devices that contain liquid nicotine. Nicotine is a neurotoxin and is readily absorbed through the skin. Wear gloves when handling any device which contains nicotine. Do not rinse e-cigarette waste as the rinse water will become hazardous waste and also need to be properly disposed of.

Safe Storage

Your storage responsibilities under the law are determined by your generator size or category. Because nicotine is an acute hazardous waste, a generator may only accumulate up to 1 kilogram (kg), or 2.2 pounds, in a calendar month before becoming a large quantity generator.

- See the [Determining Your Hazardous Waste Generator Size](#) fact sheet
- See the fact sheet at the [Hazardous Waste – Generator Requirements](#) fact sheet

Safe Disposal

E-cigarette waste should not be thrown into the trash or put down the drain. Any device containing liquid nicotine must be disposed of at a permitted hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facility (TSDF) or recycled at a legitimate recycling facility. Shipment to a TSDF or a legitimate recycler requires an EPA ID number and must be done using a hazardous waste manifest. Hazardous waste related records must be kept for a minimum of three years after the record is no longer active.

- See [Obtaining an EPA ID Number](#) for more information

If your site is only a very small quantity generator (VSQG), you may have the option to dispose of e-cigarette waste at a solid waste management facility with prior approval from the facility. However, most solid waste management facilities cannot accept liquids. VSQGs may still need to ship their e-cigarette waste to a hazardous waste TSDF if solid waste disposal is not an option.

Batteries

Nicotine-containing devices often contain batteries which may also pose a threat to human health and the environment. Batteries can be a source of toxic metals. Some batteries, particularly rechargeable lithium-ion batteries, are a regulated hazardous waste known as universal waste.

Safe Handling

Use caution when handling devices that contain batteries. Make sure the device is turned off before storing. Do not attempt to remove the battery from a nicotine-containing device on your own.

Safe Storage

Store any batteries in a cool, temperature-controlled environment. Batteries, particularly rechargeable lithium-ion batteries, have a documented history of starting fires. If possible, store batteries away from the nicotine-containing devices. Batteries must be stored in closed, compatible containers. The containers must be kept in good condition and labeled with the accumulation start date and the contents (e.g., universal waste batteries). The batteries can be stored on site for up to one year.

- See the [Hazardous Waste – Managing Universal Waste](#) fact sheet

Safe Disposal

As most e-cigarette devices have batteries which cannot be easily removed, DEQ recommends that the entire device be sent to an approved hazardous waste TSDF.

Helpful Resources

- Idaho Department of Environmental Quality's [Hazardous Waste in Idaho](#)
- EPA's [Opinion on e-Liquid as Hazardous Waste](#)
- Public Health Law Center's [Disposing of e-Cigarette Waste FAQ for Schools and Others](#)
- Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) [Tips for Safe Disposal of E-Cigarettes and Nicotine Waste](#)

For More Information

For specific questions, contact your DEQ regional office:

- | | | | |
|------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| • Boise: | (208) 373-0550 | • Lewiston: | (208) 799-4370 |
| • Coeur d'Alene: | (208) 769-1422 | • Pocatello: | (208) 236-6160 |
| • Idaho Falls: | (208) 528-2650 | • Twin Falls: | (208) 736-2190 |

For general information, visit www.deq.idaho.gov or call DEQ's Hazardous Waste Bureau at (208) 373-0502.