

SUBJECT

DATE

- 1501. RCRA Empty Containers and The Debris Rule
- 1502. Exceptions to Free Liquids in Landfills Prohibition

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AUG 25, 2022
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TWO MINUTE TRAINING

TO: CENTRAL PLATEAU CLEANUP COMPANY

FROM: PAUL W. MARTIN, RCRA Subject Matter Expert
CPCCo Environmental Protection, Hanford, WA

SUBJECT: EXCEPTIONS TO FREE LIQUIDS IN LANDFILLS PROHIBITION

DATE: SEPTEMBER 1, 2022

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TWO MINUTE TRAINING

SUBJECT: Exceptions to Free Liquids in Landfills Prohibition

Q: A customer understands that disposal of containerized liquids is prohibited in hazardous and dangerous waste landfills. However, the customer wants to know if there are exceptions for containers with free liquids placed in a landfill, and if there is a test method for determining free liquids?

A: Per [WAC 173-303-140\(4\)\(b\)\(ii\)](#), [[40 CFR 264.314\(c\)](#)] containers holding free liquids must not be placed in a landfill unless all free-standing liquid has been:

- Removed by decanting, or other methods;
- Mixed with (non-biodegradable) sorbent or stabilized (solidified) so that no free-standing liquid is observed; or
- Otherwise eliminated.

Exceptions to free liquids in landfills include:

- Very small containers, such as ampules; or
- Containers designed to hold free liquids for use other than storage, such as batteries or capacitors; or
- Labpacks disposed of in accordance with [WAC 173-303-161](#) [[40 CFR 264.316](#)].

To demonstrate the absence or presence of free liquids in either a containerized or a bulk waste, the customer must use [SW-846 Test Method 9095](#) (Paint Filter Liquids Test). A small amount of material is placed in a paint filter (a paper cone) and if any portion of the material passes through and drops from the filter within the 5-minute test period, the material contains free liquids.

SUMMARY:

- Containers holding free liquids must not be placed in a landfill unless all freestanding liquid is removed, mixed with a non-biodegradable sorbent, or eliminated.
- Exceptions to the free liquids prohibition include ampules, batteries, and labpacks.
- The Paint Filter Liquids Test is used to determine the absence or presence of free liquids.

WAC 173-303-140(b) is attached to the e-mail. If you have any questions, contact me at [Paul W Martin@rl.gov](mailto:Paul.W.Martin@rl.gov) or at (509) 376-6620.

TWO MINUTE TRAINING - ATTACHMENT

SUBJECT: Exceptions to Free Liquids in Landfills Prohibition

WAC 173-303-140 Land disposal restrictions.

4) Land disposal restrictions and prohibitions. The land disposal requirements of this subsection apply to land disposal in Washington state.

(b) Disposal of liquid waste. Special requirements for bulk and containerized liquids.

(i) The placement of bulk or noncontainerized liquid dangerous waste or dangerous waste containing free liquids (whether or not sorbents have been added) in any landfill is prohibited.

(ii) Containers holding free liquids must not be placed in a landfill unless:

(A) All free-standing liquid:

(I) Has been removed by decanting, or other methods; or

(II) Has been mixed with sorbent or stabilized (solidified) so that free-standing liquid is no longer observed; or

(III) Has been otherwise eliminated; or

(B) The container is very small, such as an ampule; or

(C) The container is designed to hold free liquids for use other than storage, such as a battery or capacitor; or

(D) The container is a labpack and is disposed of in accordance with WAC 173-303-161 and this chapter.

(iii) To demonstrate the absence or presence of free liquids in either a containerized or a bulk waste, the following tests must be used: Method 9095 (Paint Filter Liquids Test) as described in "Test Methods for Evaluating Solid Wastes, Physical/Chemical Methods" EPA Publication SW-846 as incorporated by reference in WAC 173-303-110 (3)(a).

(iv) Sorbents used to treat free liquids to be disposed of in landfills must be nonbiodegradable. Nonbiodegradable sorbents are: Materials listed or described in (b)(iv)(A) of this subsection; materials that pass one of the tests in (b)(iv)(B) of this subsection; or materials that are determined by the department to be nonbiodegradable through WAC 173-303-910.

(A) Nonbiodegradable sorbents.

(I) Inorganic minerals, other inorganic materials, and elemental carbon (e.g., ...