

Scrap Metal, Recycling, and Landfill Disposal Bans

What Is Scrap Metal?

Scrap metal means bits and pieces of metal parts (rods, bolts, wheel weights) or metal pieces that may be combined together with bolts or solder (radiators, scrap vehicles) which can be recycled. Some scrap parts contain lead, a toxic substance and potential pollutant. Scrap catalytic converters contain platinum, a valuable, recyclable metal. Managing scrap metal safely will help prevent pollution at your salvage yard.

Lead Scrap

Lead wheel (tire) weights and battery cable ends are common sources of lead. Lead is also found in radiators, heater cores, steering columns, soldered parts (circuit boards) and electronic components. Before removing parts such as radiators or heater cores, drain fluids carefully to prevent spills and manage them appropriately. If you need to use a cutting torch, wear respiratory protection, such as a respirator with appropriate filters, to reduce the risk of breathing airborne lead that may be released by heating lead scrap.

Health Alert! To avoid generating toxic lead fumes, use a reciprocating saw rather than a cutting torch to remove lead portions from scrap parts when appropriate. Store scrap items containing lead in a covered container capable of handling the excessive weight of the lead.

- Marking the container "Lead Scrap" will help ensure non-lead scrap is not mixed with it.
- Large scrap items, such as radiators that cannot be stored in a covered container, should be stored to prevent contact with rain, snow and storm water.
- Battery cable ends can be left attached to the battery and recycled along with the battery.
- Recycle lead parts with a metals battery recycler.

Health Alert! After working with lead scrap, always wash well before smoking or eating to avoid ingesting lead.

Catalytic Converters

Store waste catalytic converters in a marked container to prevent mixing with other scrap. Recycle catalytic converters with a catalytic converter collection center.

Cores

Core parts, such as alternators, master brake cylinders, starters and brake pads should be returned to a parts supplier for rebuilding. Before returning brake cylinders or any other part containing fluid, be sure to drain and manage the brake fluid appropriately.

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Other Recyclable Materials

Common recyclable materials are: (1) cardboard, including corrugated and boxboard; (2) glass containers; (3) compostable yard and food waste; (4) newsprint; (5) office paper; (6) steel and aluminum cans; and (7) plastic containers (made of HDPE or PET).

Many municipalities and Solid Waste Districts have mandatory recycling ordinances that apply to residential and commercial wastes. Check with your municipality or Solid Waste District to find out if there is mandatory recycling for businesses and the types of materials required to be recycled.

Landfill Disposal Bans

Vermont law prohibits the disposal of the following materials in Vermont landfills:

- lead-acid and nickel-cadmium batteries,
- waste oil
- tires
- paint
- fluorescent bulbs and lamps, and other mercury-added products
- any hazardous waste

Generally, these materials will require recycling at specialized facilities and some may be accepted at municipal hazardous waste collection events or facilities.