

Protecting the Environment When Cars go Kerplunk

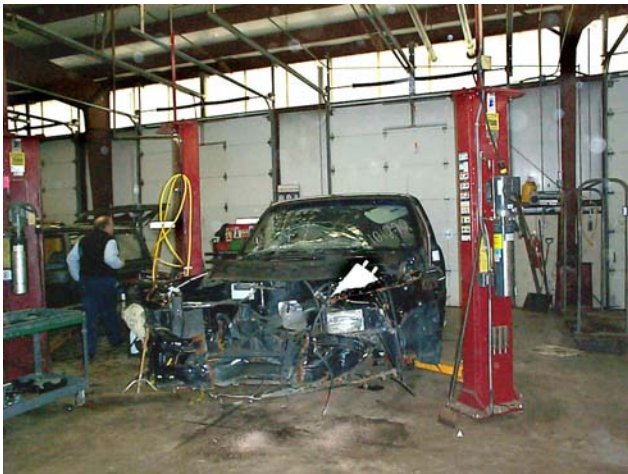
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After passenger cars and other vehicles are scrapped and sent to the local salvage yard, what happens then? Think about all the liquids, pieces and parts that make up your average car. Where do they go? Across Ohio, there are 771 auto salvagers who are responsible for storing, recycling or disposing of cars and car parts. The amount and types of materials that must be managed include scrap tires, fluids like antifreeze, freon, used oil and gasoline, oil filters and mercury switches, just to name a few. Improper management and disposal of these materials could lead to environmental and health concerns.

Ohio EPA's [Small Business Assistance Office](#) (SBAO) and [Division of Hazardous Waste Management](#) (DHWM) recognized that this was a significant concern and set about finding a way to help educate owners and operators of these facilities on best management practices and environmental regulations that affect their businesses.



After identifying areas that affected salvage yard operators, Ohio EPA staff worked together to develop compliance assistance materials including a guidance manual and video, "Everything But the Rattle: Environmental Best Management Practices for the Auto Recycling Industry." The [guidance manual](#) was produced to help educate auto salvage business owners about areas of their operations that may be subject to environmental regulations.



The video is designed to help salvage yard owners identify the environmental regulations that apply to them and introduces some easy steps to follow to get into and stay in compliance. It was produced in partnership with the Ohio Auto and Truck Recycling Association and was partially funded by a grant from the [Ohio Environmental Education Fund](#).

The 15-minute video features four auto salvage yards that have used low-cost, low-tech practices to achieve compliance and become more profitable. Ohio businesses featured include Marshall's Cars and Parts in Bluffton; Milliron Auto Parts in Mansfield; Ridge Road Auto Parts in Cleveland; and Walt's Auto, Inc. in Springfield.

Concepts communicated in the video include how to manage automotive fluids so they don't contaminate a business' property, the kind of equipment to use to make this process easier, how to reuse or recycle fluids, requirements for burning used oil for heat, effective management of scrap tires and batteries, and how easy it is to get a storm water permit.

To ensure that facilities used the information produced, DHWM staff identified and targeted 69 Bureau of Motor Vehicle registered sites in central Ohio for follow-up. In July 2002, after mailing guidance materials to each facility, DHWM staff visited 55 sites to see if the information was being put into practice. Violations were found at 60 percent of the facilities inspected. The most common compliance issues included improper used oil container labeling and used oil releases to the environment.

DHWM staff then worked with each facility to help them understand how their operations were affecting the environment and ways that they could improve to ensure compliance and also to save time and money. Thanks to the guidance provided, all violations noted during the inspections have now been resolved.

The project, video and guide have received both national and international attention. Before the project was even completed, U.S. EPA invited staff to speak about the project at the National Compliance Assistance Roundtable. The video project was also highlighted as a



significant compliance assistance tool on the Air Pollution Distance Learning Network satellite broadcast, part of the U.S. EPA's Air Toxic Network. Staff attended the Ohio Auto and Truck Recyclers Association's annual meeting to present the video and discuss the project and the Ontario Ministry of Environment has requested permission to use the guidebook and video in development of their own materials.

But perhaps the best indicator of the project's success is the feedback Ohio EPA has received from individual auto salvage yards. The video was distributed to all licensed auto salvage yards in the state. Each was asked to return a postage paid video evaluation form. Based on the forms received, many auto salvage yards are making changes suggested by the video to improve compliance with their environmental requirements.

Copies of the free video and guide are available through Ohio EPA's Small Business Assistance Office by calling (800) 329-7518 or through the Web at: <http://www.epa.state.oh.us/ocapp/salvageguide.pdf>.