

People Aren't the Only Thing Heading to the Beach

By Don Sheppard, Ventura County PWA, IWMD

As people head to the beach to beat the heat, excess water from yards and driveways carries oil from leaky vehicles, chemicals, and pet waste to the beach as well. In fact, the California Department of Resources Recovery and Recycling (CalRecycle), using 1998 data, calculates 56 million gallons of oil leaks out of engines or is burned in engines annually in our state, along with another 20 million gallons “unaccounted for” each year. Many of these improperly managed gallons may be contaminating our environment.

If you or a friend changes your oil, take the used oil to any one of a number of Certified Collection Centers (CCCs) locally. Most of the big box auto parts stores, such as AutoZone, accept used oil and oil filters from the public, and if you ask, they will pay you \$0.40 per gallon for the oil.

However, antifreeze is typically not accepted at CCCs, but it can be disposed at your city's household hazardous waste (HHW) facility along with many other common household items like kitchen and bathroom cleaners, lawn and garden products, paint, etc. You can find out when your city's next HHW collection event is held by visiting the Ventura County Public Works Agency website www.vcpbublicworks.org. Contact numbers are included as you do need to make an appointment. You will need to choose the facility that serves your jurisdiction and this information is also included.

These HHW collection events are free to residents, but qualified businesses are usually expected to pay for hazardous waste disposal. However, several cities offer subsidies to qualifying businesses in their respective jurisdictions. By law, businesses that do not generate more than 220 pounds / 27 gallons, or 2 pounds of acutely hazardous waste qualify. Using the information above, contact your city HHW coordinator for cost or subsidies. Paint contractors may also be able to dispose of paint at no cost at a participating retail store. Visit www.paintcare.org for details and participating store locations.

There are also three agricultural used oil collection locations near the fields and orchards. William L. Morris Chevrolet in Fillmore, Silvas Petroleum in Oxnard, and LBL Equipment in Somis host self-serve oil collection systems. California law allows agricultural business generators to transport up to one 55 gallon drum of used oil to one of these centers. There is no charge to utilize the equipment for used oil disposal. They may also accept used oil filters. Just don't leave any containers on site and if you spill any oil please clean it up with supplies provided.

Proper disposal of used oil, oil filters, household chemicals, and picking up pet waste are simple things that can be done to help prevent such wastes from flowing down the storm drains to the beaches and ocean.

On the internet: <http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/usedoil/Public/default.htm>