STORAGE, HANDLING, DISPOSAL AND RECLAMATION OF LUBRICANTS

Introduction
The disposal of used oil is generally treated with little consideration of its devastating effect on the environment. Few people are aware of the fact that a mere one litre of used oil can contaminate ONE MILLION litres of water. The following guidelines are offered for the storage, handling and disposal of lubricants. It is not possible to deal with all the eventualities in this writing and users are urged to contact Lubricants Online for any additional information that they may require or for advice concerning any problems that they may encounter.

Handling
Lubricants are relatively safe materials, only mildly irritant to the normal skin on occasional or short term contact. Frequent or prolonged contact should be avoided as this could result in severe irritation. The observance of good working practices and high standards of personal hygiene can virtually eliminate any risks associated with the handling of lubricants.

Storage
Outdoor storage of lubricants should be avoided wherever possible. If this is not feasible the following precautions must be observed:

- Store drums inverted or on their sides, with bungs in the 3 & 9 o'clock positions
- Avoid direct exposure to sunlight or temperature extremes
- Keep bungs tightly closed and wipe the drumhead clean before opening them
- The following products should not be stored outdoors –
  - Transformer oil
  - Refrigeration compressor oil
  - White and medicinal oil
  - Water soluble metal working fluids

Disposal
Spillages are best dealt with by absorption, using sand or other inert material. This material must then be collected and disposed of in an acceptable manner. In the case of large spillages, measures must be implemented to prevent pollution of drainage systems and waterways. Authorities must always be advised of a large spill.
Reclamation

Used oil drainages must be collected and disposed of in an environmentally responsible manner. It can be a source of raw material but its acceptability and value will depend on keeping various types of oil separate and free of water and other deleterious contaminants. The ROSE Foundation (Recycling Oil Saves the Environment), a non-profit organization of which most of the oil marketing companies are members, handles and coordinates the collection, storage and disposal of used oil. ROSE has contracted members who:

- collect and process used oil from workshops, service stations and other generators of used oil throughout South Africa
- provide mini bulk tanks and then collect the used oil on a planned basis when the tanks are nearly full and transfer the product to either bulking points or the large depots or direct to processors
- assist in arranging transportation to transfer the used oil to approved processors who operate under stringent environmental controls.
- are environmentally approved processors that buy oil from approved collectors and using a series of treatment steps, they purify and process used lube oil, usually into an industrial fuel oil.

For more information, refer the following link: [www.rosefoundation.org.za](http://www.rosefoundation.org.za)

NB. Notice is drawn to statutory requirements as laid down in the National Waste Management Strategy published in the Government Gazette No. 33277 of 08 June 2010.