

Implementing a Curbside Used Oil and Filter Collection Program

Summary of Implementation Steps

The intent of this guidance is to assist local jurisdictions in California to implement curbside collection of used oil and/or oil filters, or to improve existing curbside collection programs. Curbside collection complements the availability of collection centers (including Certified Collection Centers [CCCs]), resulting in more used oil/filters collected than via collection centers alone.

The collection and subsequent recycling of used oil and oil filters is important as a means of preventing pollution and conserving valuable resources. Poured onto the ground or into storm drains or tossed into trash cans (even in a sealed container), used oil can pollute soil, groundwater, streams, and rivers. Even after draining, used oil filters contain on average more than 10 ounces of used oil. Used oil can be recycled, cleaned, and used again, while most oil filters also contain steel, itself recyclable.

The following implementation steps have been identified as the key elements to achieving success with a curbside collection program for used oil and oil filters. While implementation of these steps will vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, following some aspect of each step is likely to help the implementation and long term operation of a successful program.

1. **Decide if curbside collection is right for your jurisdiction**
2. **Identify the program champion**
3. **Set goals and objectives**
4. **Develop support for your program**
5. **Contact private hauler(s)**
6. **Determine curbside operations**
7. **Determine outreach strategies**
8. **Consider Community Based Social Marketing**
9. **Develop program financing**
10. **Understand administrative and regulatory requirements**
11. **Evaluate your program**
12. **Ensure program sustainability**



Photo: Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

1. **Decide if curbside collection is right for your jurisdiction**

If your jurisdiction currently offers curbside garbage collection, it is likely to be a good candidate for implementing a curbside used oil/filter collection program unless its population includes very few *Do It Yourselfers* (DIYers).

As part of this decision making process, jurisdictions should consider the following:

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- *Is curbside collection of garbage (and possibly recyclables and/or green wastes) already offered in all or some areas of your jurisdiction?*
- *How many DIYers are located in your jurisdiction and, of these, how many are likely to dispose of oil improperly?*
- *Are there DIY populations - especially those living in single-family residences - that are not well served by collection centers?*
- *Does your jurisdiction have demographic characteristics that suggest it might be successful in offering a used oil/filter curbside collection program?*
- *Is there evidence of improper disposal of used oil and/or filters in your jurisdiction?*

2. Identify the program champion

If curbside collection seems like a possible option for your jurisdiction, identify one or more people who will lead the efforts to further assess and, if appropriate, implement the option.

- Enthusiastic and sustained leadership at both management and operational levels is an important ingredient of successful curbside collection programs.
- Many of the more successful programs currently are championed by very enthusiastic individuals, some of whom have been in their positions for a long time.
- Those jurisdictions that believe in a curbside collection program's value and importance seem to have little or no difficulty in offering one.

3. Set goals and objectives

Decide on goals and objectives for a collection program in your jurisdiction. In addition to providing direction for program implementation, having explicit goals and objectives in place provides a reference point for subsequent evaluation of the program (see discussion in Implementation Step 11).

- To the extent possible, objectives (at least) should be measurable, and steps should be taken before and during implementation to establish both baseline and ongoing measurements.
- Example goal: "Offer households curbside collection of used oil and filters at the lowest cost possible."
- Example objective: "Provide used oil/filter curbside collection to all households with existing garbage/recyclables pickup service with no increase (or minimal increase) in existing fee."

4. Develop support for your program

Develop a support network for implementing your curbside collection program.

The support team can come from: political and administrative leadership; residents, waste hauler(s); local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) including environmental and other community groups; other jurisdictions.

- Successful implementation requires such support.
- Do your homework, so that you can make convincing arguments as to why the



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collection of used oil and filters needs to be increased and why curbside collection is likely to help in your jurisdiction.

- Communicate with prospective supporters, individually or collectively, preferably face-to-face. A well-publicized community workshop helps to create face-to-face networks that can be used to build support.
- Try to anticipate and prepare valid counter-arguments to the most likely objections.
- Emphasize (especially to residents) the convenience of curbside collection.

5. Contact private hauler(s)

If your jurisdiction uses one or more private haulers to pick up garbage/recyclables, contact each one to discuss possible used oil/filter curbside collection pickup programs.

- Recognize that some haulers may be very resistant to adding used oil/filter pickup while others will be less resistant or even enthusiastic provided that they do not lose money as a result.
- Point out that the number of used oil/filter pickups on a particular route on any given day is likely to be relatively small compared to the number of households placing out garbage and mixed recyclables, since individual DIYers are typically unlikely to make oil/filter changes more than a few times each year.
- If you have franchise agreements with your haulers, you may want to consider such options as: requesting that used oil/filter collection be added to the existing or a new franchise agreement; offering to pay equipment costs; renegotiating the fee; defining parameters, such as the minimum frequency of service, while leaving operational details as much as possible to the hauler; and building accountability into any agreement.

6. Determine curbside operations

Determine the type of curbside operation that might best suit your jurisdiction. Keep in mind that in general, the greater the convenience to households, the more used oil/filters will be collected. It also helps if everyone comes to view as “the normal way of doing things” that used oil/filters are collected curbside on a regular basis, along with trash and recyclables.

Summary of needed decisions about curbside operations:

- *Same truck vs separate truck?*
- *Requiring a call or online request in advance vs automatic pick-up?*
- *Standardized or unrestricted containers?*
- *Empty into tank on truck or transport in containers to collection facility?*
- *System for dealing with spills?*
- *System for handling/storing oil/filters at collection facility?*
- *Disposition of oil/filters collected?*
- *Incremental staffing needs?*
- *Serve multi-family as well as single-family dwellings?*



Standard Container Used by City of Folsom
Source: http://www.folsom.ca.us/city_hall/depts/admin/solid_waste/hazmat/used_oil.asp

Curbside Collection of Used Oil and Oil Filters

Based on survey and interviews, there is no single set of operational types that is “the best” for all jurisdictions.

A detailed discussion of each of these operational decisions is provided in the complete document *Curbside Collection of Used Oil and Oil Filters: Targeting Success*, including overviews of various types of equipment used for transporting and processing used oil and oil filters by jurisdictions around California currently operating curbside used oil and oil filter collection services.

7. Determine outreach strategies

Effective outreach to the community is essential if a used oil/filter curbside collection program is to be successful. At a minimum, residents need to know about the program if they are to use it. Outreach efforts cannot be one-time; they need to be sustained, especially in communities with rapid turnover of population.

- Examine the population of your DIY community, decide upon the main “targets” for your outreach efforts, and employ the language of each target population, as needed.
- Decide whether outreach will be conducted by your jurisdiction or by your hauler(s), or both.
- Select outreach method(s), with the target DIY residents in mind.
- Decide on the content of your outreach message(s).

This calendar produced by the City of Citrus Heights includes details on the city’s free used oil and oil filter curbside collection program as one of its monthly features.

Free Pickups
Batteries, Motor Oil & Oil Filters

Residential customers of Republic Services can recycle household batteries with FREE pickup service on their recycling collection day. Place batteries in a clear, sealed, quart-size plastic bag (such as a Ziploc bag), and place the bag on top of your recycling cart on your recycling collection day. Types of household batteries accepted include dry cell, rechargeable, alkaline and the small, button-shaped and lithium batteries. (Please NO automotive batteries). Please note: Lithium batteries must be taped at the ends to prevent a fire or an explosion.

Curbside Collections Make It Easy to Recycle Used Motor Oil and Oil Filters

Citrus Heights residents can recycle used motor oil and filters curbside FREE on their recycle collection day.

- Pour motor oil into a clear, plastic milk or water jug or a container provided free by Republic Services.
- Tape lid to close it securely.
- Place oil filters in sealable plastic bag (e.g., Ziploc, or an oil filter bag provided free by Republic Services).
- Place jugs and/or filters on curb next to your recycle cart.
- Maximum 5 gallons of oil per pickup.
- Clean filter 24 hours before bagging. One filter per bag.
- Wipe excess of oil bag, seal.
- Place filter bag beside your recycling cart or, if recycling card or hang the bag on the oil container using the pre-cut hole at the top of the bag provided by Republic Services.
- Republic Services will leave replacement bags and containers.
- To obtain an oil recycling jug or an oil filter bag, call (916) 638-9000 or 725-9060.

Motor Oil Facts

- Motor oil does not wear out. It gets dirty. Recycling it saves a valuable resource.
- Used motor oil can be refined into fuel oil. A gallon of used oil, when reprocessed, can generate enough energy to power a home with electricity for half a day.
- Disposal of improperly, one gallon of used motor oil can pollute 1 million gallons of drinking water. That's a year's supply of water for 50 people.

REMEMBER: Used oil and filters are collected only on your recycling day.

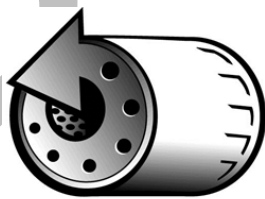
March

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

REPUBLIC SERVICES (916) 638-9000 OR (916) 725-9060



RECYCLE
USED OIL



RECYCLE
USED OIL FILTERS

Graphics available on the CalRecycle website:
<http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/UsedOil/Graphics/>

8. Consider Community Based Social Marketing

Using variations of some of the methods listed in Implementation Step 7 above, and other techniques as appropriate, your jurisdiction may choose to go beyond traditional “outreach” and to adopt an approach known as “Community Based Social Marketing (CBSM),” in which psychological knowledge regarding behavior change is used to overcome barriers to the activity being promoted - here, participating in a used oil/ filter curbside collection program if offered.

9. Develop program financing

Consider what new funding, if any, might be required by you and/or your hauler(s) to pay capital and operating costs, after allowing for possible changes in revenue.

If your jurisdiction operates its own collection service, you need to:

- Estimate capital expenditures including replacements (e.g., for adding racks to trucks; for oil/filter containers, if supplied to residents; for tanks to store used oil/filters after pickup; etc.).
- Estimate operating costs (e.g., labor; transportation of oil/filters to recycling facilities if applicable; etc.) over the expected life of the program.
- You need also to estimate any revenues that the program might produce and/or might be applied to it.
- If the program is to be conducted in its entirety by one or more franchised haulers, financing may be a matter of negotiating an appropriate increment to the garbage/recyclables collection fee charged to households.



*City of Vallejo Used Oil Transfer Station and Container Drain Rack
Photo: Cal Poly San Luis Obispo*

10. Understand administrative and regulatory requirements

Administrative requirements must be met in order to qualify for any kind of used oil recycling funding from the State. Used oil is managed as a hazardous waste in California but specific regulatory requirements apply when used oil is collected at the curbside from households and is destined for recycling. Filters containing recyclable metal are also subject to specific provisions. To learn more about the latest administrative requirements, consult with CalRecycle’s Used Oil Program; to learn more about the latest regulatory requirements,

consult with a California Department of Toxic Substances Control Regulatory Assistance Officer and/or your Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA).

11. Evaluate your program

Once your program has been up and running for a while (at least a year), and thereafter on a regular basis, it should be evaluated.

Program evaluation will help you to modify your program as needed to better meet your clients' needs and/or to determine if the program is successful enough to continue.

- The starting point for an evaluation is the set of goals and objectives adopted for the program by your jurisdiction.
- Evaluation may be conducted in-house or by a consultant. Regardless, every effort must be made to avoid conflicts of interest (real or perceived) or any other kind of bias.



Source: Fresno County
<http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/DepartmentPage.aspx?id=1>

12. Ensure program sustainability

Do what you can to ensure that your program will be sustainable, in order to prolong the benefits of protecting the environment and conserving resources into the future.

Key considerations for program sustainability:

- Plan for the **long term**, at least 5-10 years or more.
- Plan for the **continuity of leadership** that is committed to the program.
- Plan for the **continuity of financing** (e.g., try to avoid relying on “soft money” to pay operating costs).
- Make curbside collection a **habitual part of the community's fabric** (i.e., try to reach the point at which residents take it for granted that this is the way to dispose of used oil and filters).

For More Information

Read the complete document entitled *Curbside Collection of Used Oil and Oil Filters: Targeting Success - Guidance for California Jurisdictions* and/or visit the Used Oil Program website at:

<http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/UsedOil/>



San Miguel curbside oil collection program truck
Photo: Bill Worrell