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MONTHLY HOTLINE REPORT

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3. Hazardous Waste Liquid-containing Pumps and the Liquids in Landfills Prohibition

RCRA prohibits the disposal of hazardous waste containing free liquids in hazardous waste landfills, where free liquids are defined as those that readily separate from the solid portion of a waste under ambient temperature and pressure (40 CFR 260.10). To meet this requirement, must owners and/or operators disposing of pumps containing free liquids dismantle the pump to remove the liquid?

Owners and/or operators would not be required to dismantle the pump. When disposing of containerized liquids, owners and/or operators have three options: remove the liquid by a method such as decanting; add nonbiodegradable sorbent material or solidify the waste so that free liquids are no longer observable; or eliminate the free liquids by some other means (264.314(d)(1) and 265.314(c)(1)). The regulations provide exclusions from this requirement for small containers, such as ampules, and containers designed to hold free liquids for use other than storage, such as batteries or capacitors (264.314(d)(2)-(3) and 265.314(c)(2)-(3)). Since the pump holds liquid for use other than storage, the owner and/or operator of the pump will be exempt from the requirement to remove or sorb free liquids.