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## HOTLINE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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### 1. Regeneration Versus Reclamation for Spent Lead-Acid Batteries

In order to encourage environmentally sound recycling, EPA has promulgated special standards for some recyclable materials and exempted others from hazardous waste regulation. For example, reclaimed spent lead-acid batteries are subject to the special requirements of Part 266, Subpart G (261.6(a)(2)(iv)). On the other hand, batteries returned to a battery manufacturer for regeneration are exempt from hazardous waste regulation (261.6(a)(3)(ii)). Are spent lead-acid batteries returned to a battery manufacturer for regeneration regulated under Subpart G of Part 266, or are they exempt from all hazardous waste regulation?

Spent lead-acid batteries returned to a battery manufacturer for regeneration are not Subject to Subpart G of Part 266, nor to any other Subtitle C regulations. While the term "reclamation," when used in a regulatory context, typically includes both materials recovery and regeneration (261.1(c)(4)), the standards governing the reclamation of spent lead-acid batteries in Subpart G of Part 266 do not apply to the regeneration of these batteries. Subpart G regulates materials recovery, which involves the extraction from spent lead-acid batteries of distinct end-products, such as scrap metal, lead values, ammonium sulfide, and plastic. Regeneration, on the other hand, involves processing to remove contaminants in a way that restores a product to its original, usable condition. Because EPA determined that battery regeneration is similar to the recycling of a commercial chemical product and presents minimal risk to the environment (48 FR 14496; April 4, 1983), battery regeneration, including the regeneration of spent lead-acid batteries, is exempt from Subtitle C regulation (261.6(a)(3)(ii)).