

Empty Drum Disposal – The Last Step for Your Project

We all want to be good stewards of industry and of the landscape. When selling and installing a product that contributes to energy efficiency and supports the goals of sustainability, every step counts. Empty drums need to be gathered and disposed of according to specific instructions and in compliance with local, state, and federal requirements. Avoid shortcuts or choices that will reflect poorly on your company or the industry. Below is some guidance from the Center for the Polyurethanes Industry and SPFA about the last step—drum disposal:

1. Always remember to read the manufacturer's Safety Data Sheet for specific disposal instructions.
2. Proper personal protective equipment should be used when handling drums, and should be appropriate for and specific to the characteristics of the material that was in the drum prior to it being "empty".
3. Ensure the drum is empty prior to disposal. Even empty drums can retain product residue which may be harmful to workers' health and the environment.
4. To ensure proper disposal of drums, contact a professional drum re-conditioner, professional scrap metal recycler, or an approved landfill.
5. The Reusable Industrial Packaging Association (RIPA) can help you find a drum reconditioner. Use their website www.reusablepackaging.org to find a drum reconditioner near you. CPI spoke with this group recently and they have some good resources for you.
6. Some metal recyclers or re-conditioners may require drums to be decontaminated prior to accepting the drum. Before attempting to use a neutralization solution to decontaminate an empty drum, contact the product manufacturer for drum decontamination procedures.
7. Do not reuse drums that have not been professionally cleaned and reconditioned by appropriate entities.
8. Do not allow anyone, including workers or the general public to reuse drums. They should not be offered for resale through social media to the public.
9. Do not torch cut, weld, or heat drums. Highly toxic vapors and gases may result.
10. Always consult federal, state and local regulations prior to disposing of used component chemical drums and waste!

For additional information on disposal of wastes and waste containers from spray polyurethane foam processing, refer to the documents [Guidelines for the Responsible Disposal of Wastes and Containers from Polyurethane Processing](#) and [Disposal of Empty Drums Containing Polyurethane Chemicals](#) in the [CPI Resource Library](#).