



Rules for Auto Salvage Recyclers

This guide provides a summary of the environmental requirements for auto recyclers (salvage yards). This document is **not a substitute** for knowing the rules of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). For free and confidential assistance, contact the TCEQ's Small Business and Local Government Assistance (SBLGA) at 1-800-447-2827.

What environmental rules apply to auto salvage yards?

Several environmental rules apply to auto recycling. These rules influence how businesses manage wastes and help protect air and water. The key steps to meet your environmental obligations are:

- Apply for required permits, such as a Storm Water Discharge Permit, a Waste Water Permit, or an air Permit-by-Rule.
- Store, recycle, and dispose of all wastes (including batteries, tires, refrigerants, oils, oil filters, and antifreeze) to avoid spills or releases.
- Contact the appropriate local officials to determine if local rules apply.
- Contact the TxDOT office nearest you so they can approve your site.
- Use best management practices to ensure a clean and healthy yard for your employees and the environment.

This guide summarizes what actions you need to take to operate your yard in compliance with state and federal law.

Water Rules

All auto recycling facilities classified under Standard Industrial Classification Code 5015 must have a Storm Water Discharge Permit. This permit requires you to take precautions so that things like oil spills, oil recycling, and storage of automotive parts are handled in a way that prevents water pollution.

If you have a floor drain at your facility, you must know where this drain discharges. If the drain leads to a sanitary sewer, you must notify the local sewer authority

to discharge anything other than sanitary wastewater. If the floor drain leads to a storm sewer, you need to obtain a TCEQ Wastewater Permit. You should plug your drain when not in use to keep any accidental spills from being discharged.

For the permit forms, call SBLGA at 1-800-447-2827.

Air Rules

The air rules that apply to you depend on the activities conducted at your site. See the table below to determine if you need an air permit.

Do you need an air permit?	
Yes, if you are:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ painting ■ stripping ■ sandblasting ■ grinding ■ degreasing
No, if you:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ are <i>not</i> burning or incinerating any parts or materials, ■ are <i>not</i> cutting up or shredding metal (cars or large parts) ■ do <i>not</i> have stationary equipment or smelters that generate air emissions
Maybe, if you are:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ burning ■ smelting ■ incinerating ■ cutting ■ shredding

If you do any burning, smelting, incinerating, cutting, or shredding, call SBLGA at 1-800-447-2827 for help determining what air rules apply to your site.

If you do any painting, stripping, sandblasting, grinding, or degreasing, you need to comply with the conditions in an air permit-by-rule (PBR). Go to www.sblga.info for a copy of these PBRs.

Waste Rules

You must meet requirements for proper storage, handling, transport, and disposal of certain wastes, some

of which may be considered hazardous. For detailed instructions on how to properly manage your waste, go to www.sblga.info and click on “Auto Salvage Yards.”

The rules for used oil, oil filters, differential oil, transmission oil, and hydraulic fluid are in Title 30 of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section 324. Lead acid battery rules are in 30 TAC 328. Antifreeze and refrigerant requirements are in Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 82.

To remove refrigerants from automobiles, you must be certified and have certified equipment. Since recycling refrigerants can be a lucrative market, it may be worthwhile to look into the proper capture, filtering, and resale of the refrigerant gas. Contact the Environmental Protection Agency’s Stratospheric Protection Hotline at 1-800-296-1996 for information about refrigerant recycling.

Do all that you can to make sure your site is not a nuisance to those around you.

You can use best management practices (BMPs) at your site to ensure the safety of your workers and the environment. For sample BMPs, go to www.sblga.info and click on “Auto Salvage Yards.”

Do other rules apply to my site?

Yes! City, county, other state and federal agencies have rules that apply to salvage yards.

Department of Transportation

You should call the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) office closest to your site. They will drive by to determine whether you need a screen to block the view of your site from the road. Also, TxDOT (512/465-7611) can provide information about the proper transfer of your vehicle registrations and titles.

City and County Requirements

City and county health regulations can sometimes be tougher than state or federal laws, so make sure you know exactly what the rules are.

The county where your business is located probably has its own rules for things like vector control (insects and rodents) and fire codes. Look in the blue pages of the telephone book for the local environmental and health authority and the fire marshal’s office. You may also contact your Chamber of Commerce.

How can I be sure I am keeping a clean yard?

The most common reason that the TCEQ inspects a business is a complaint. These complaints usually are associated with:

- bad odors,
- poor housekeeping, or
- the appearance of the property.