



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

AUG 21 1998

OFFICE OF
SOLID WASTE AND EMERGENCY
RESPONSE

Ms. Catherine A. McCord
Manager, Environment and Business Integration
Safety-Kleen
1000 North Randall Road
Elgin, Illinois 60123-7957

Dear Ms. McCord:

Thank you for your April 25, 1997 letter to Michele Anders requesting a written confirmation of the regulatory status of used parts washing solvent that is to be used for drum wash at Safety-Kleen's facilities without first being reclaimed. You asked whether the used parts washing solvent would be excluded from the definition of solid waste pursuant to 40 CFR §261.2(e)(1) when it is used as an effective substitute for a commercial product. Based on the information that you provided, it is the Agency's understanding that Safety-Kleen intends to collect used parts washing solvents from its customers. Some of the used parts washing solvent from designated customers would be used for drum washing at Safety-Kleen facilities. This used solvent designated for drum washing would be consolidated, but would not be reclaimed, prior to its use for drum washing. The solvents designated for drum washing would also be segregated (i.e., always in separate containers or tanks) from the other used solvents collected from Safety-Kleen's customers.

Because the material (i.e., used solvent continuing to be employed in solvent uses) remains a product, your question about the applicability of 40 CFR §261.2(e)(1) is moot. That regulatory section is intended to apply to secondary materials, which is not the case for used solvents that are not yet "spent."

The Agency has previously stated that when a used solvent is employed for another solvent use, this continued use indicates that the solvent remains a product. The used solvent in this case is a material continuing to be used as a solvent, the purpose for which it is intended, rather than a spent material being reused. Consequently, the used solvent to be employed for drum washing would not be considered a solid waste and would not be subject to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act ("RCRA") Subtitle C hazardous waste regulations when generated, transported, or used. 50 Fed. Reg. 614, 624 (1985). Accordingly, used parts washing solvents that are collected and consolidated by Safety-Kleen and then used for drum washing without first being reclaimed would not be a RCRA solid waste.

In the case of shipments of used solvents in tanker trucks, if any part of a shipment of solvent is reclaimed, burned for energy recovery, or otherwise defined as solid or hazardous waste (as opposed to being directly used only for drum wash), the entire shipment must be managed according to the

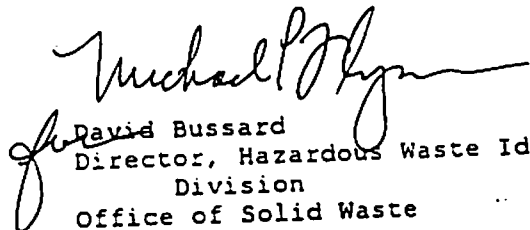
applicable RCRA Subtitle C regulations. In situations in which used solvents collected from multiple sources are handled in separate drums or containers on the same truck, each container must be handled according to the applicable regulations (depending on how the solvent is to be used or managed), including hazardous waste manifest requirements. After the solvents have been used for drum washing, any residual solvents would be subject to a hazardous waste determination and must be managed according to the applicable RCRA Subtitle C requirements.

Furthermore, the Agency is aware of the potential for the "continued use" policy to be abused, and thus, notes that the continued use must be legitimate for the used solvents to be excluded from regulation as a solid waste. The Agency would consider the continued use of the used solvents for drum washing to be legitimate in situations in which: 1) the used solvents are effective for the drum-washing operation, especially if the used solvents substitute for solvents that would otherwise have to be purchased (if the used solvents would not be an effective washing agent for the drums, using the used solvents in lieu of other effective drum-washing agents would not be considered legitimate), 2) the used solvents are used only for washing drums that actually need it (if the used solvents are used as drum-washing agent when the drums do not need washing, using the used solvents would not be considered legitimate), and 3) the used solvents are not used in excess of what would normally be required to wash drums (if the used solvents are being used in excess of the amount of solvents needed for the drum-washing operation, e.g., more than would be necessary to wash the drums effectively, using the used solvents would not be considered legitimate).

The regulatory interpretation provided above is based on the U.S. EPA's interpretation of federal regulations. Some states in which the continued use of the used parts washing solvent occurs may have different regulatory requirements or interpretations. For case-specific determinations on the status of the continued use of the parts washing solvent for drum wash, please contact the appropriate state regulatory agency or EPA Regional Office.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Jeff Hannapel at (703) 308-8826.

Sincerely,


David Bussard
Director, Hazardous Waste Identification
Division
Office of Solid Waste