

Treatment of Aerosol Cans

Aerosol cans commonly used on construction sites are often discarded after use either when they are empty or part full. Empty aerosol cans are still pressurised containers and are likely to contain residual amounts of flammable liquid and / or gas. Empty and part full aerosols containers should be collected and stored in separate containers for off site disposal as hazardous (or special) waste.

If large volumes of waste aerosol cans are being produced on site it may be of benefit to 'treat' the aerosols to remove the hazardous substances prior to disposal. This must be carried out under controlled conditions using the correct equipment to remove the hazardous components. Thereafter, the 'treated' metal cans may be sent off-site for metal recycling i.e., it will be cheaper to remove non-hazardous 'treated' aerosol cans than to remove hazardous 'untreated' aerosol cans.



If you wish to 'treat' (*e.g., this typically means crushing*) waste aerosol cans on site you must ensure that the treatment activity is conducted under controlled conditions, namely:

1. Obtain an Environmental Permits, Waste Management Licences or exemptions as required under waste management regulations, namely:
 - **In England & Wales.** A T15 Environmental Permit Exemption is needed for the treatment of up to 3,000 waste aerosol cans per year. If more than 3,000 waste aerosol cans are treated per year, then an Environmental Permit will be required.
 - **In Scotland.** A Waste Management Licence or Exemption.
2. Ensure equipment being used to 'treat' waste aerosol cans ensures:
 - The collection and secure storage of the cans for recycling;
 - The collection and secure storage of empty cans for disposal or recycling
 - The filtering of gas and solvents through carbon filters which are approved to a suitable British standard. These filters will need to be disposed off site as hazardous waste.
3. Complete risk assessments / method statements for the treatment activity, which must be reviewed and approved for use.
4. The person using the equipment must be competent. Records of competence must be retained for inspection on request.

Under no circumstances is it acceptable to crush and / or puncture empty or part full aerosol cans in uncontrolled conditions.

When the hazardous components have been removed, the empty aerosol cans may be disposed of from site as a non-hazardous waste stream. The appropriate EWC codes to use are as follows:

- 16-05-04*** For aerosol cans that contain residues or dangerous substances i.e., untreated aerosol cans, part full cans etc.
- 16-05-05** Empty aerosol cans i.e., cans treated to remove all contents.

You must also check that the disposal site destination for the waste aerosol cans is licensed / permitted to accept this waste type. If you require any assistance or additional guidance please contact your Regional Environmental Advisor.

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