

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



Environmental Fact Sheet

Final Rule Promotes Metals Recovery from Waste Water Treatment Sludge (F006)

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is encouraging metals recovery in the Metal Finishing Industry to increase recycling of F006 waste. While protecting human health and the environment, this final rule will minimize economic barriers to recycling waste water treatment sludge.

Background

EPA's Common Sense Initiative (CSI) provides a consensus-based, decision-making process for stakeholders from federal and state governments, public interest groups, and regulated industry. As part of this Initiative, this final rule provides a new opportunity for the Metal Finishing Industry to practice better environmental protection under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). It encourages the legitimate recovery of metals from F006 waste that would otherwise be land disposed. The hazardous waste water treatment sludge (i.e., the RCRA listed hazardous waste, F006) that is generated from the electroplating processes in the Metal Finishing Industry generally contains recoverable amounts of metals. Although some of the waste water treatment sludge is recycled for metals recovery, a large percentage of the waste is land-disposed. By minimizing economic barriers to recycling of F006 waste through metals recovery, generators of F006 waste are encouraged to choose metals recovery as their waste management option for F006 waste.

Action

EPA is encouraging metals recovery by allowing large quantity generators of F006 waste up to 180 days (or 270 days, if applicable) to accumulate F006 waste on site without a hazardous waste storage permit or interim status, provided that these generators meet certain conditions. Currently, these generators may accumulate this waste on site for up to 90 days. To accumulate F006 waste up to 180 days (or 270 days, if applicable), a generator of F006 waste must: (1) have implemented pollution prevention practices that reduce the amount of any hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant entering F006 or otherwise released into the environment prior to its recycling; (2) recycle the F006 by metals recovery; (3) accumulate no more than

20,000 kilograms of F006 waste on site at any one time; and (4) comply with the applicable management standards, such as accumulation in tanks, containers, or containment buildings, labeling and marking accumulation units, preparedness and prevention, contingency plan and emergency procedures, personnel training, and waste analysis and record keeping. (These management standards are the same as those that currently apply to the 90-day on-site accumulation provisions in the existing regulations.) Since the proposal, the final rule has been modified in several ways. Both the pollution prevention condition and the maximum amount of F006 that can be accumulated have modified. Also the final rule now includes metals recovery on-site as well as off-site.

The final rule also allows large quantity generators to accumulate F006 up to 270 days without a hazardous waste storage permit or interim status, provided that the generator complies with the conditions stated above, if they must ship their F006 waste off site to a metals recovery facility that is located more than 200 miles away. The generator may also request additional accumulation time or accumulation of F006 waste in excess of 20,000 kilograms waste in the event of unforeseen, temporary and uncontrollable circumstances.

EPA believes that the proposed 180-day (270-day, if applicable) accumulation time for F006 waste will increase the amount of F006 waste that is recycled because the longer accumulation time will mean that generators can send larger shipments of F006 waste off site for metals recovery less often, thereby reducing transportation costs associated with F006 waste recycling. This proposal provides incentives to promote metals recovery from F006 waste rather than treatment and land disposal of F006 waste, and also includes safeguards to insure that F006 waste is managed in a manner that is protective of human health and the environment. Thus, EPA believes that this final rule is consistent with RCRA's national objective of "minimizing the generation of hazardous waste and the land disposal of hazardous waste by encouraging process substitution, materials recovery, and properly conducted recycling and reuse, and treatment."

For More Information

This *Federal Register* notice and this fact sheet are available in electronic format on the Internet. The notice is available at [http://epa.gov/fedregstr/\[date of publication\]](http://epa.gov/fedregstr/[date of publication]). The fact sheet and other documents related to this rule are at <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/hazwaste/gener/f006acum.htm>. For additional information or to order paper copies of any documents, call the RCRA/Superfund Hotline at (800) 424-9346 (toll free) or (703) 412-9810 in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The RCRA/Superfund Hotline operates weekdays (except federal holidays) from 9:00am to 6:00pm. Additional information may also be requested by writing to the RCRA Information Center, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Ariel Rios Building, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20460.