



Management of Vaping Liquids and E-Cigarettes in Schools

What are vaping/e-cigarette devices and why are they of concern?

Vaping devices, also known as E-cigarettes or vape pens, produce an aerosol by heating a liquid that usually contains nicotine — the addictive drug in regular cigarettes, cigars and other tobacco products — flavorings, and other chemicals.

Vaping devices contain lithium or lithium-ion batteries and liquid nicotine. Damaged vaping device batteries have caused fires and explosions, some of which have resulted in serious injuries. In addition, acute nicotine exposure can be toxic. Discarded or confiscated nicotine-containing materials can present a significant risk to human health and the environment if improperly disposed of and are regulated as a hazardous waste. Incorrectly disposing of these materials can have serious regulatory consequences, and these wastes must be handled, maintained and stored in accordance with both federal and state hazardous waste regulations.

How should vaping devices collected by schools be managed?

Vaping devices and liquids containing nicotine need to be managed as a hazardous waste. If a school is in possession of vaping devices or e-cigarettes that have been confiscated or left at the school, they should work with their hazardous waste transporter to properly dispose/recycle these devices just like they would other hazardous waste that is generated at the school and follow [NH Hazardous Waste Regulations](#). It is illegal to dispose of these materials with regular trash. Alternatively, if the school has a resource officer that immediately takes ownership of the confiscated vaping devices or e-cigarettes for potential enforcement cases, those materials must be disposed of properly through the local police department after their investigation is complete.

Best Management Practices

- ✓ Make sure your school has a valid EPA Identification Number and is notified as a hazardous waste generator, unless your school resource officer is managing this waste through the local police department.
- ✓ Upon collection, immediately bag each vaping device individually in a plastic bag.
- ✓ Place all of the individually bagged vaping devices into a sealed 5-gallon plastic (polyethylene) pail or bin.
- ✓ Label the pail or bin “**Vaping Devices-Hazardous Waste.**”
- ✓ Check vaping devices for swelling, leaking and damage prior to storing.
- ✓ Place any swollen or damaged vaping devices in a separate closed, watertight, storage container such as a plastic (polyethylene) pail or bin. Add sand, kitty litter, vermiculite or another fire containment material to aid in safe storage.
- ✓ When handling damaged vaping devices, always wear safety equipment (e.g., gloves, apron and eye protection). Liquid nicotine is very toxic and should not come in contact with skin or face. Damaged batteries could cause burn or other injury.
- ✓ Avoid stockpiling vaping devices. Remove for proper recycling/disposal with a New Hampshire Hazardous Waste Transporter.
- ✓ Store the collection pail in a locked storage area where it cannot be accidentally knocked over or easily accessed.
- ✓ Keep a fire extinguisher in the storage area.

For More Information

Please note this information is only an introduction and does not fully cover the specifics of the hazardous waste regulations. For more information, please contact the Pollution Prevention Program at [\(603\) 271-6460](tel:6032716460) or NHPPP@des.nh.gov or NHDES Hazardous Waste Management Bureau at 1-866-HAZWAST ([1-866-429-9278](tel:18664299278)) or [\(603\) 271-2942](tel:6032712942). A list of registered New Hampshire hazardous waste transporters, copies of other fact sheets, and the Hazardous Waste Rules are available on the NHDES website at www.des.nh.gov.

