

Universal Waste Disposal for Your Business

Charleston County Environmental Management would like to educate businesses on proper end-of-life management for fluorescent light bulbs.

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers:



What exactly is a Universal Waste Lamp (UWL)?

Defined as the portion of the bulb or tube part of an electric light. Examples include fluorescent, high intensity discharge, mercury vapor, neon, metal halide lamp and high-pressure sodium.

Does Charleston County's Recycling Center take UWLs from businesses?

The recycling center does not accept CFLs from businesses; only households.

Why can't my business dispose of UWLs by regular waste disposal?

Due to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) all generators of spent fluorescent lamps are responsible for their proper disposal. The act specifies that unless you are a household, you are liable for proper disposal of your hazardous waste. Businesses must follow all state and federal regulations regarding the proper management of fluorescent bulbs.

What is hazardous about UWLs?

Mercury is a hazardous substance that when released to the environment can contribute to neurological impairment in child development. In addition, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency considers mercury a persistent bio-accumulative toxic substance. Proper recycling of fluorescent lamps prevents mercury from being released to the environment.

Where can my business go for proper end-of-life management for UWLs?

Local retailers have recycling programs to help you out. Please visit the following websites for more information:

Lowe's: www.lowes.com

Home Depot: www.homedepot.com



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