



# Aerosol Container Management

## **WHAT IS AN AEROSOL CONTAINER?**

An aerosol container is a dispenser that holds a substance under pressure and that can release the substance, usually by means of a propellant gas, in a number of forms such as wet sprays, fine sprays, powder sprays, foams, or pastes. Common liquefied propellants include propane, butane, and isobutane.

## **WHAT ARE THE SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS FOR AEROSOL CONTAINERS?**

Some aerosol products (e.g., paints, solvents, pesticides) are hazardous due to the presence of hazardous ingredients. Aerosol products should be used with adequate ventilation and/or personal protective equipment to prevent inhalation and exposure that may result in harmful health effects. Extreme temperatures may cause containers to rupture and moisture may cause them to rust, resulting in a release of the contents to the environment. Most aerosol containers pose a fire hazard because they contain highly flammable propellants such as propane and butane. Pressurized containers present additional concerns. If punctured, the contents may be released so forcefully that injuries can result.

## **WHAT IS THE PREFERRED MANAGEMENT METHOD FOR AEROSOL CONTAINERS?**

- Empty the container through normal use.
- Send the empty container to a scrap metal recycler or discard as a solid waste.
- While landfill disposal of the empty containers is an acceptable alternative, it is the least preferred option.

## **HOW SHOULD I MANAGE AEROSOL CONTAINERS THAT CANNOT BE EMPTIED?**

- First try to return or exchange malfunctioning aerosol containers. Malfunctioning aerosol containers returned to the supplier or manufacturers are considered “products”, not “wastes”.
- Non-empty aerosol containers that cannot be returned or exchanged should be managed as hazardous waste – complete the necessary waste chemical tag and manifest and call Risk Management and Safety @ 844-4805 to coordinate removal.

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/rms/pdf/internal-manifest.pdf>