

PHOTO-PROCESSING SERVICES

WHY BE CONCERNED?

Home-based businesses often use a variety of processes and chemicals that may generate wastes that differ from the basic domestic wastes generated by a residential home. Home-based businesses and hobbyists that offer photo-finishing services generate the same types of wastes that some commercial businesses do. These chemicals and associated wastes should be labeled, used, stored, and disposed of in a responsible manner to prevent pollution and to comply by the law. While it may seem that your contribution to pollution is minor, effects of chemicals, runoff, and wasted water from hundreds or thousands of homes in your region can really add up. The following pages contain a self-assessment checklist that may be completed to help you identify potential sources of pollution.

IDENTIFY ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

Processes and potential wastes associated with photo processing that could harm the environment are listed below. Check the activities that apply to your business.

- Photo processing, using traditional developer and fixer solutions.
- Disposal of developer and silver-rich fixer.
- Disposal of rinse water and wash solutions.
- Disposal of spent/old film.
- Chemical storage – outdated inventory.
- Unused or abandoned wells.

IDENTIFY METHODS OF WASTE DISPOSAL

Check the waste disposal methods that you use.

- Municipal sanitary sewer
- Septic system or lagoon
- Ground, storm sewer, or surface water
- Licensed hazardous waste disposal option
- Licensed sanitary landfill/transfer station
- Compost
- Recycle
- On-site landfill (prohibited in most cases)
- Incineration/on-site burning (see Solid Waste section)

The Small Business Environmental Assistance Program, SBEAP, is a confidential non-regulatory program funded by the state in an effort to assist small businesses with environmental concerns. Contact the SBEAP at 800-578-8898 or www.sbeap.org if you have questions.

If your home-based business discharges its non-domestic waste to a septic system, then your business is required to complete and submit an inventory form to KDHE. For inventory forms, call KDHE at 785-296-5560. Some wastes associated with a home business are considered "industrial waste" and may not be disposed of in a septic tank or domestic lagoon. Non-domestic waste from your home-based occupation should not be disposed of in a sanitary sewer without written permission from the municipality. Never put wastes in a storm drain or dump on the ground! See Wastewater section in the front of this publication.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

- Photo processing, using traditional developer and fixer solutions, generates waste solutions periodically. Waste developer can usually be collected and disposed of via a sanitary sewer. However, best management practices dictate that the spent fixer solution, which is silver-rich, be treated to remove silver prior to disposing of the solution to a sanitary sewer system. In fact, this is a now a requirement in some Kansas communities. Silver is a non-renewable resource that has an economic value and when disposed of improperly can be harmful to aquatic life. Different technologies are available to recover this silver. Vendor lists are available through SBEAP at 800-578-8898, and staff can help you determine which type of technology may be best for your process. Once the silver is recovered from the solution, it will either be dealt with by the vendor who provides the service or can be cashed in for a rebate. In some cases, a business may be permitted to transfer small quantities of silver-bearing wastes to a shop that has a recovery unit.
- Disposal of rinse water and wash solutions, if these materials are non-hazardous (see Hazardous Waste section, if needed), may be disposed of through the sanitary sewer with permission. If you utilize a lagoon or on-site septic system for disposal of your wastewater, it may be most practical for you to collect the waste solutions and then periodically dispose of them via the sanitary sewer.

- Disposal of spent or old film may or may not be regulated as a hazardous waste, depending on the amount of silver the film contains. Obtain a letter from the supplier that states this regulatory information and the disposal or recycling recommendations. Contact the SBEAP at 800-578-8898 for the most recent Kansas regulatory information related to disposal of old film.

Disposal of any wastes other than domestic wastes to an on-site septic system or lagoon is prohibited. Never dump wastes onto the ground or into a storm drain. This practice can result in the contamination of streams, lakes, or groundwater.

- Chemical storage and outdated chemical inventory can create an environmental risk if the product is not safely stored, monitored for leaks, or disposed of properly. If the material can no longer be used for its intended purpose and must be disposed of, it needs to be evaluated to determine if it is a hazardous waste. See the main section under Hazardous Waste for evaluation guidelines.
- Unused or abandoned wells should be plugged in accordance with KDHE regulations. Abandoned wells, if not properly sealed, can provide a direct route for contamination to enter the groundwater. In addition, open wells are a safety threat to small children and animals. A record of the plugging should be filed with KDHE. For more information, consult the general Water section of this document or call KDHE at 785-296-3565.

Some wastewater treatment programs in Kansas require photo processors be permitted or registered.

POLLUTION PREVENTION AND WASTE MINIMIZATION OPPORTUNITIES

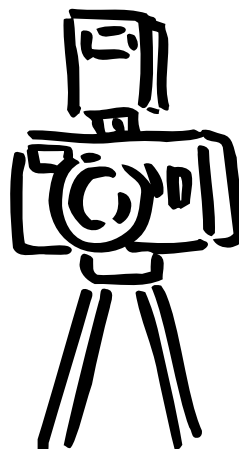
- Utilize a silver recovery system for treatment of silver-rich solution. Some systems on the market can put money in your pocket.
- Obtain written permission from the local sewage treatment plant to dispose of non-hazardous solutions to its system.
- Avoid the use of hazardous cleaners such as solvents or caustics; substitute less toxic or non-toxic substances as cleaning agents.
- Keep storage and work areas clean and well

organized, and keep all containers properly labeled.

- Inspect materials upon delivery, and immediately return unacceptable or outdated materials to the supplier.
- Keep accurate records/inventory of raw material usage. Mark the purchase date on each container and practice "first in, first out" so that older materials are used up before new ones are opened.
- Practice preventative maintenance to avoid future losses. Periodically inspect containers and equipment for leaks.
- Keep all containers covered to prevent evaporation, contamination, spillage, or drying out of contents.
- Keep waste streams separate for reuse, recycling, or treatment. Keep non-hazardous materials from becoming contaminated.
- Abandoned wells should be plugged and reported in accordance with KDHE regulations (see Water section).

WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION

- The Kansas SBEAP has several publications that address these issues of regulatory compliance and pollution prevention. See the list of SBEAP publications at the end of this manual or go to www.sbeap.org to view or download.
- For questions, call 800-578-8898. All services are free and confidential.
- A summary of environmental laws is found in the introduction/preface. The following laws may be applicable to this business:
 - wastewater regulations
 - hazardous and solid waste regulations
 - local pretreatment regulations
- Regulatory compliance information can be viewed or downloaded from the KDHE Web site at www.kdhe.state.ks.us.



- The Photo Marketing Association provides silver recovery information from a business perspective. Contact them at 800-762-9287 or at <http://www.pmai.org/>.
- See Resources section at the back of this document.

SOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- Some materials adapted with permission from the Code of Management Practice Guide for Photo Processors.

ACTION STEPS

What can you do to reduce wastes or environmental risks?	Set target dates for action.

Notes: