

Fact Sheet
January 2002

Investment Waste Produced in Jewelry Manufacturing



JEWELRY MANUFACTURING WASTE STREAM

DTSC is one of six Boards and Departments within the California Environmental Protection Agency. DTSC's mission is to restore, protect and enhance the environment, to ensure public health, environmental quality and economic vitality, by regulating hazardous waste, conducting and overseeing cleanups, and developing and promoting pollution prevention.

State of California



California
Environmental
Protection Agency



What is this waste?

Investment molds are used to cast pieces of jewelry. The plaster material (investment) used to form the mold contains gypsum and silica. After the investment has been used to cast a piece of jewelry, it is broken apart to remove the jewelry in a process called devestment, and the used investment becomes waste. Devesting of jewelry castings can generate metal dust and silica dust.

Why is this waste hazardous?

Investment waste may be hazardous if it contains silica dust or metallic "fine powders*" that are harmful to human health and the environment [1].

Why must this waste be managed safely?

If your investment waste is hazardous to human health and the environment, it is important that you manage it safely, even if it contains precious metals. Current laws and regulations tell you how to manage hazardous waste in order to protect public health and safety, and the environment [2]. These laws and regulations also specify how to recover precious metals from hazardous wastes that contain precious metals. Jewelry manufacturers can protect public health and safety, and avoid costly fines and penalties, by managing their hazardous wastes in compliance with these laws and regulations.

How should I manage this waste?

If your business generates a hazardous waste, it is your responsibility to ensure that you manage this waste properly (please see the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) fact sheet on "[Hazardous Waste Generator Requirements For Jewelry Mart Operators](#)"). The recovery of precious metals from hazardous investment waste is considered hazardous waste treatment‡ and requires a permit or grant of authorization.

* "Fine powder" is a metal in dry, solid form having a particle size smaller than 100 micrometers (0.004 inches) in diameter. (Cal. Code of Regs., tit. 22, § 66260.10.)

‡ "Treatment" is any method, technique, or process designed to change the physical, chemical, or biological character or composition of any hazardous waste or any material contained therein, or removes or reduces its harmful properties or characteristics for any purpose, including, but not limited to, energy recovery, material recovery, or reduction in volume. (Health & Saf. Code, § 25123.5 and Cal. Code Regs., tit. 22, § 66260.10.)

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our web site at www.dtsc.ca.gov.

It is unlawful to dump any hazardous waste into the trash or onto the land, or to pour hazardous waste down the sink, into a storm drain, or down the toilet. If you want to treat any hazardous waste that you generate, or if you want to recover precious metals from your hazardous investment waste, you must get a permit or grant of authorization for onsite hazardous waste treatment. You can [contact your local Certified Unified Program Agency \(CUPA\)](#) for assistance, or DTSC at (800) 728-6942 if there is no CUPA in your area.

Can I send my investment mold waste to a company that can recover precious metals from the waste?

Yes. However, if your investment waste is hazardous waste because it contains metallic "fine powders," toxic silica dust, or any other material that is harmful to human health or the environment, it can only be sent offsite to a facility that is permitted to treat the waste. It is unlawful to use the United States Postal Service, any common parcel carrier, or anyone other than a DTSC-registered transporter to transport your hazardous waste offsite. For additional information regarding transport requirements, please see the DTSC fact sheet on "Hazardous Waste Generator Requirements for Jewelry Mart Operators."

Disclaimer

This fact sheet is intended to provide guidance for managing hazardous investment waste. This fact sheet covers only some of the basic management requirements under the Health and Safety Code and the California Code of Regulations. This document does not replace or supersede relevant statutes and regulations. This fact sheet was prepared in January 2002 and is based on statutes and regulations in effect at that time. Interested parties should always review the most current statutes and regulations.

References

1. Cal. Code .Regs., tit. 22, div. 4.5, ch. 11.
2. Health & Saf. Code, div 20, ch 6.5, and Cal. Code .Regs., tit. 22, div. 4.5.

¥ The term "onsite facility" is summarized for purposes of this fact sheet to mean a hazardous waste facility at which hazardous waste is generated, and which is owned by, leased to, or under the control of the generator of the waste. (Health and Saf. Code, § 25117.12 and Cal. Code Regs., tit.22, § 66260.10.)

‡ An "offsite facility" means a hazardous waste facility that is not an onsite facility. (Health & Saf. Code, § 25117.11 and Cal. Code Regs., tit. 22, § 66260.10.)

Please direct questions to the DTSC Office nearest you, or call the regional Public and Business Liaisons at (800) 72TOXIC (1-800-728-6942) or visit www.dtsc.ca.gov

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This fact sheet is also available in Armenian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Esta información se encuentra disponible también en armenio, español y vietnamita.

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Tài liệu này được viết bằng tiếng Armenia, tiếng Tây Ban Nha và tiếng Việt