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Inflator/Seat Belt Pretensioners Recycling

Summary

Under Federal regulations, unused commercial chemical products, such as unused airbag inflators/modules and seat belt pretensioners/retractors (IMPR), being reclaimed or recycled are not a solid waste. Material not defined as a solid waste cannot be a hazardous waste. However, if the IMPR are not intended to be reclaimed or recycled, but are disposed of, or treated before they are disposed of, they may meet the EPA's definition of a hazardous waste.

Regulatory Information

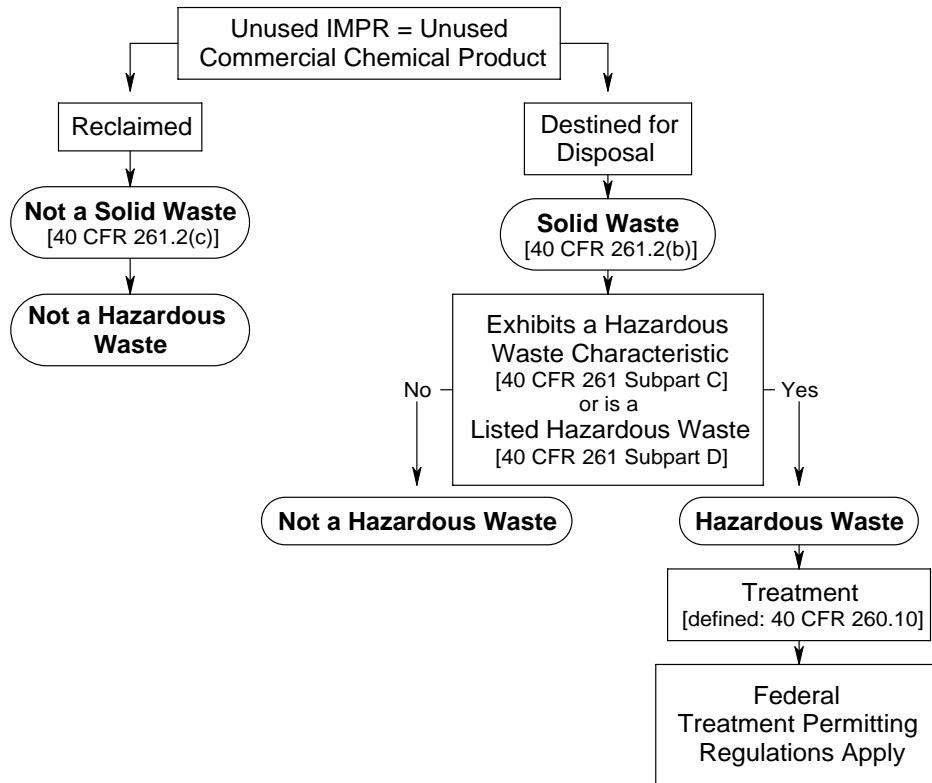
Under Federal regulations [40 CFR 261.2(c)], unused commercial chemical products, such as unused IMPR being reclaimed, are not a solid waste. If a material is not a solid waste it cannot be a hazardous waste. State regulations for solid waste may apply. If the unused IMPR are disposed of, or stored, or treated, before they are disposed, they would be a solid waste according to 40 CFR 261.2(b)(3).

Permits required for the "treatment" of the IMPR will depend on the future state of the airbags (disposal vs. recycling) and the status of the airbags as a Federal regulated hazardous waste. If the IMPR are going to be reclaimed, then as discussed earlier, they are not solid waste according to the RCRA regulations. Therefore, the IMPR will not be subject to RCRA hazardous waste treatment permitting requirements. If the airbags are destined for disposal, they will be considered a solid waste according to the RCRA regulations and if they are then identified as a hazardous waste, permitting requirements will apply for treatment of (deploying) the IMPR.

The regulations included in this fact sheet are the Federal RCRA requirements. Many states have hazardous waste programs with more stringent requirements.

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Federal Regulations for IMPR



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