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Universal Waste Mercury-Containing Lamp Management

1. 0 Introduction

1.1 What is the concern?

Businesses in Oregon are increasingly using fluorescent lighting because it is energy-efficient and saves money on electricity bills. Although using fluorescent lighting saves energy and money, it does present special disposal considerations. Fluorescent and high-intensity discharge (HID) lamps (as well as some neon lamps) contain mercury and may be considered hazardous wastes when disposed. Mercury is a toxic metal that can accumulate in living tissue and cause adverse health effects. Although the amount of mercury in each lamp is small, several million lamps are discarded by Oregon businesses and government each year, thus making these lamps possibly the largest source of mercury in our solid wastestream. When a lamp is broken or placed in a landfill or incinerator, the mercury can contaminate the air, surface water or ground water.

1.2 What is a Mercury-Containing Lamp?

A mercury-containing lamp is defined as an electric lamp in which mercury is purposely added by the manufacturer for operation of the lamp. This definition includes fluorescent lamps and high intensity discharge lamps (HID). HIDs can include lamps such as high pressure mercury, metal halide or high pressure sodium lamps. Persons generating waste mercury-containing lamps may manage them either as a universal waste or as a waste subject to applicable hazardous waste regulations.

1.3 How do I manage mercury-containing lamps in Oregon?

In Oregon, persons generating mercury-containing lamps have several management options for waste lamps. In most cases, especially when large volumes of hazardous waste is generated, waste lamps are most easily managed as a universal waste. The universal waste rule was designed to encourage the collection of certain hazardous wastes that are generated by a wide variety of businesses and institutions. Depending on your individual situation, other options may be preferred to managing your waste lamps as universal waste. A summary of the waste management options are presented in the following table. For specific requirements, refer to the rules listed in the table below.

Mercury Containing Lamp Management Options

Management As:	Conditions Which Must Be Met	Applicable Rules	Factsheet Section	Comments
Universal Waste	Management of waste subject to applicable universal waste management standards.	See 40 CFR* Part 273 and OAR** 340 Division 113	See Section 2	Universal waste rule designed to encourage collection of waste. Waste lamps ultimately