



## Environmental Stewardship Awards

# Lube Stop

In 2008, Lube Stop received a Governor's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Environmental Stewardship. The award recognizes Ohio companies and organizations committed to environmental compliance and reducing pollution.

Founded in 1985, Lube Stop has become one of the largest quick oil change company in Northeast Ohio, with 240 employees operating in 37 locations and servicing more than 30,000 customers a year.

### Sustainability Program

Beginning in 2006, Lube Stop embarked on a process to develop a sustainability program based on existing environmental best practices and the development of new programs that reflect the company's sincere interest in sustainable business and protecting Northeast Ohio's environment. This process encouraged companywide communication to harvest innovative ideas that would positively impact the environment, customers, and company.

This process resulted in the Lube Stop Sustainability Program, which is an ongoing and continually improving set of programs and processes. This program has resulted in voluntary development and implementation of several programs to address accidental release prevention and preparedness; discharge to water; energy management; materials procurement; materials use; and waste management. The program focuses the whole company on environmental stewardship to reduce the probability of environmental spills or other environmental accidents while examining ways to curb energy use across the company.

### Resource Conservation

Lube Stop created recycling programs for used oil, oil filters and antifreeze. The company also revised the way it orders packaged lubricants, cut down on electricity and natural gas use, and became more efficient in the storing and recycling of paper records. Highlights of the company's efforts include:

- Collecting and recycling more than 400,000 gallons of waste oil annually **without** charging "environmental" or "shop service" fees. In addition, every location accepts up to 5 gallons of waste oil from backyard mechanics, free of charge, during store hours.
- Recycling more than 35,000 gallons of antifreeze annually.
- Annually promoting *Ground Water Awareness Week*.

#### The Lube Stop, Inc., is recognized for:

- Developing a sustainability program, which is an ongoing and continually improving set of programs and processes focused on reducing the company's ecological footprint and improving the communities in which it operates;
- Recycling more than 400,000 gallons of waste oil and more than 37,000 gallons of antifreeze annually;
- Using approximately 29,121 gallons of re-refined, or "upcycled" 50/50 green antifreeze annually; and
- Launching a new program to use upcycled oil derived from recycled motor oil, becoming the first chain in the nation to do so in its entire market.

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- Recycling used oil filters, reclaiming aluminum and steel components.
- Developing Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) plans for every store.
- Offering significant fleet program discounts to local companies focused on improving Ohio's environment.
- Moving most commonly used viscosity oils to bulk tanks, reducing consumption of plastic bottles and cardboard.
- Recycling all obsolete electronic equipment and toner cartridges. Eliminating the use of 480 toner cartridges.
- Saving \$2,000 in electricity costs and reducing gas utility costs.

Lube Stop uses over 325,000 oil filters, and they recycle the same amount annually. Those filters are recycled so that the steel, rubber, and waste oil can be reclaimed. In addition, the company uses upcycled 50/50 green antifreeze in a closed-loop product cycle. This process reduces the risk of environmental contamination and eliminates the need to produce virgin ethylene glycol, which is derived from natural gas (a non-renewable resource).

### Re-refined Oil

Everyone in the company is constantly looking for ways to implement closed-loop product supply chains, as well as offer services that would reward customers and companies committed to improving the environment. Lube Stop became one of the first fast oil change chains in the country to offer an oil change centered on re-refined motor oil, a service the company called "EcoGuard." Lube Stop also is partnering with another company, which is constructing the first oil re-refinery in Ohio, to collect the company's used oil. Once the construction is finished, the facility will create 15 million gallons of base oil stocks from used motor oil, including the oil collected from Lube Stop. Those stocks will be used to create more re-refined motor oil, creating the "closed-loop" system that Lube Stop strives for. The launch of the program was highly successful, quickly gaining customer acceptance. Even though the cost of "EcoGuard" is higher compared with the "regular" oil change, a high percentage of customers choose to use this service.

### Economic Benefits, Economic Management Accounting, and Environmental Management System

Lube Stop is able to negotiate a market rate for waste oil which helps reduce the company's expenses. The use of re-refined antifreeze, remanufactured laser toner cartridges, and the conversion of high volume oil viscosities to bulk containment systems has significantly lowered Lube Stop's product expenses. Lube Stop uses cost accounting to make strategic sustainability decisions. Lube Stop is able to use income statement, balance sheet, and cash flow reports to model potential savings (or added expense) derived from sustainable business practices and implement those strategies that make the most sense for the company and environment.

Sustainable business goals and initiatives are established and outlined in Lube Stop's annual strategic planning process. An objective was the implementation of a formal sustainability program, as well as the rollout of a hybrid vehicle discount program. Lube Stop's process for continuous environmental improvement involves a variety of sources, including ideas obtained during sustainability networking events, industry best practices, as well as continuous communication to harvest ideas from within the organization. Given Lube Stop's relatively small, flat hierarchical structure, good ideas can be implemented almost immediately.

### For more information

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If you would like additional information about Ohio EPA's environmental stewardship award program, contact the Office of Compliance Assistance and Pollution Prevention (OCAPP) at 800-329-7518, or visit OCAPP's website at <http://epa.ohio.gov/ocapp/ohioe3.aspx>.