

Vaping/E-Cigarette Devices and Safe Management in Schools

What are vaping/e-cigarette devices and why are they of concern?

Vaping devices also known as E-cigarettes, vape pens, vapes and e-cigs and other names produce an aerosol by heating a liquid that usually contains nicotine—the addictive drug in regular cigarettes, cigars, and other tobacco products—flavorings, and other chemicals that help to make the aerosol. Users inhale this aerosol into their lungs. Bystanders can also breathe in this aerosol when the user exhales into the air.

Vaping devices contain lithium or lithium-ion batteries and liquid nicotine.

Damaged vaping device batteries have caused fires and explosions, some of which have resulted in serious injuries.

In addition, acute nicotine exposure can be toxic. Children and adults have been poisoned by swallowing, breathing, or absorbing vaping device liquid.¹

How should vaping devices collected by schools be managed?

Vaping devices may need to be managed as a hazardous waste.

If a school is in possession of vaping devices or e-cigarettes that have been left at the school, they should work with their local [solid waste management entity](#) or [hazardous waste contractor](#) (search H) to properly dispose/recycle these devices just like they would with other hazardous waste that is generated at the school.

Schools are considered regulated hazardous waste generators and must follow [VT Hazardous Waste Regulations](#).

Best Management Practices

- ✓ Upon collection immediately bag each vaping device individually in a plastic bag.
- ✓ Place all of the individually bagged vaping device into a sealed five-gallon plastic (polyethylene) pail or bin.
- ✓ Label the pail or bin- **Vaping Devices/Hazardous Waste/Date of First Collection**
- ✓ Check vaping devices for swelling, leaking and damage prior to storing.
- ✓ Place any swollen or damaged vaping devices in a closed, watertight, storage container such as a plastic (polyethylene) pail or bin. Add Sand, kitty litter, vermiculite or another fire containment material such as CellBlockEx to aid in safe storage.
- ✓ When handling damaged vaping devices, always wear safety equipment (e.g., gloves, apron, and eye protection). Liquid nicotine is very toxic and should not come in contact with skin or face. Damaged batteries could cause burn or other injury.
- ✓ Avoid stockpiling vaping devices. Remove for proper recycling/disposal within one year of starting collection.

¹ US Department of Health and Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-[CDC.GOV](#)

Environmental Fact Sheet: Vaping Device Management in Schools

- ✓ Store the collection pail in a locked storage area where it can not be accidentally knocked over or easily accessed. Keep a Fire Extinguisher in the storage area.

Resources:

Hazardous Waste Contractors

Please note the state does not endorse any one of these service providers over another. Please see the [VT permitted transporters](#) list and search “H” for a listing of all permitted hazardous waste transporters serving VT.

Solid Waste Management Entities- <https://dec.vermont.gov/waste-management/solid/local-districts>

VT Department of Health Tobacco Resources- <https://www.healthvermont.gov/wellness/tobacco/resources>

VT Department of Environmental Conservation Hazardous Waste Program-
<https://dec.vermont.gov/waste-management/hazardous>