

HOW TO DISPOSE OF ICE PAINT

It looks great underneath the ice, but once thaw time comes, what do you do with your paint-contaminated ice?

Another season is almost in the books and the signs of spring are upon us. With the final rentals and tournaments taking place, some rinks are looking forward to the off-season. Removing the ice, however, is the one last project that needs to be prepared for prior to putting the skating season in the books. For years, removing ice is something that many rinks simply did as the last step in the process, giving it little thought, especially with regards to legal ramifications.

As some rinks have found out through firsthand experience, however, there certainly is a right way and a wrong way to dispose of this large amount of potentially contaminated ice. Among the many particles that can be found in the ice are human contaminants and ice paints, among other things in the ice that we are removing. So how do you properly dispose of your ice?

The first step is to prepare a written plan for removing the ice. It is critical that you know exactly where the ice and ice paint is being disposed of, and where it will end up after melting and draining, as you will be found responsible for any damage caused by the ice paint from your facility. Before you can come up with a written plan, you

have to know what the local, state and EPA laws are regarding disposing of ice in your local area. These regulations can be very different across the country, so you will have to reach out to the local authorities in your area. Most cities and states have laws on what can be discharged down storm sewers, with the most common being that only “clear water” can be discharged

into local sewer systems. The majority of your ice can fit into this category, but when you start to get down to the ice paint, you will need an alternative plan.

Once you are familiar with the local laws and responsibilities that you have, determine exactly what it is that you are disposing of. The only way to know this is to have the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) on the ice paint that was used to paint the ice. This will tell you if you have any toxic or pollution contaminants in the paint which require you to take special precautions in the disposal process. These reports are available from all reputable paint suppliers and may be available on the Internet. If you are using high-quality ice paint, you will likely find that it will be non-toxic and will not be classified as a high contaminant, and therefore will not require expensive measures to dispose of properly.

There are several safe ways to dispose of this ice and ice paint once you know the legalities involved.

1) Use your local municipality to haul away all of the snow and ice so they can dispose of it in a satisfactory and designated area, which usually is the local landfill. You can also hire a local contractor to do this for you if you are not a city-owned or operated facility.



2) Another way is to build a filter to catch most of the ice paint. This can be accomplished by building or making an area in which to dump all of the snow and ice. Put down a large piece of plastic or tarp in an area about 16'x16'. Side walls may be needed, depending on how much ice you are going to dump. Using straw, hay or sand (whichever is cheaper), cover this square area to adequately hold all of the snow and ice you are removing from your rink. Once the filter is built, then simply remove your ice and snow and dump it on top of this filter. As the snow and ice melts, the paint pigments will be filtered out or will stay attached to whatever material you used. The clear ice that has turned to water will flow through the filter and out to the storm sewer. You will then only have a small amount of filter material saturated with ice paints to dispose of properly into the landfill or designated area. This will be much

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cheaper than hauling away the entire ice sheet.

3) If your local regulations allow it, you may already have a filter on your property. Some rinks have been told to dump the ice and snow onto the grass areas where the ground will act as a natural filter and not allow the ice paint to flow down into the local water supply. If this is the case, be certain to keep the ice and snow only on the grass and topsoil. You must check with your local EPA and city regulations before attempting this method.

4) Some facilities have a filter system already built into their snow melt pit, but these pits tend to fill up quickly

when removing ice, making it necessary for these rinks to dump outside and have a plan in place for proper disposal.

Regardless of the method you use to dispose of your ice, it is very important to know exactly where your ice is going and what it will affect. It is also a good idea to put some signage around your snow piles outside to keep the public away from these areas. You don't want the local softball team coming down to pack their post-game beverage coolers with this ice. At the end of the day, it is a wise investment spending the time to properly plan on how to properly dispose of this ice and snow to assure that it is a smooth process with no issues. ★