

GUIDE FOR EMPTIERS

WHAT IS RCRA EMPTY?

Defined by USEPA Regulations (40 CFR 261.7)

“Empty” definition is different for Bulk containers (IBCs or totes) and non-Bulk containers (drums and pails)

USEPA defines an empty bulk container in 40 CFR 261.7:

All wastes have been removed that can be removed using the practices commonly employed to remove materials from that type of container, e.g., pouring, pumping, and aspirating, and

- no more than one inch of residue remain on the bottom of the container;
- or
- no more than **0.3 %** by weight of the total capacity of the container remains in the bottom



USEPA defines an empty non-bulk container in 40 CFR 261.7:

All wastes have been removed that can be removed using the practices commonly employed to remove materials from that type of container, e.g., pouring, pumping, and aspirating, and

- no more than one inch of residue remain on the bottom of the container;
- or
- no more than **3 %** by weight of the total capacity of the container remains in the bottom



NOTE: The only difference in the “empty” definition for bulk vs. nonbulk is the maximum weight percentage

WHAT IS A RCRA EMPTY IBC?

Regulation

All wastes have been removed that can be removed using the practices commonly employed to remove materials from that type of container, e.g., pouring, pumping, and aspirating,

AND

- no more than one inch of residue remain on the bottom of the container;

OR

no more than 0.3 % by weight of the total capacity of the container remains in the bottom

What it Means

At a minimum, an IBC equipped with a valve must be emptied such that no liquid discharges from the valve when it is completely open. A liquid that runs like water will empty from the valve to leave only a small pool of liquid.

In addition to this requirement, the container must be emptied to meet one of the amounts represented below:

For thicker (more viscous) materials, such as adhesives, resins or paints, up to an inch of material at the bottom may remain. The bottom of a composite IBC bottle is not flat – but an inch of material is about 7 gallons.

Assuming the density of water, this is 0.825 gallons, or about 3 quarts of liquid.

Example



PROPER EMPTYING OF IBCs: SUMMARY

Empty as much as possible through valve, and if possible by pumping, pouring or aspirating. For chemicals that flow like water the tote should look like the photos below.

Empty container amount for any material that flows like water



For thicker materials, then make sure there is never more than an inch of material left in the bottom.

**Maximum
residue amount
for thick
materials**

