

# Guidance Document for the Storage and Handling of Petroleum Coke

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## Introduction

Petroleum coke (petcoke) is a solid product of the refining process. Many products are derived from a barrel of crude oil (e.g. gasoline and diesel) and petcoke is one of those products. After gasoline, jet fuel, diesel fuels and lubricating oils are manufactured from crude oil, some refineries put the remaining material through additional processing called coking. Coking uses heat to crack or break down large hydrocarbon molecules to produce “fuel grade” petcoke, a highly stable, solid fuel as well as other grades of petcoke. Petcoke is produced from all types of crude oil including light, sweet crude oil and heavy sour crude. Petcoke is a valued commodity around the world and there has been a global market for petcoke for decades.

Fuel grade petcoke is an essential fuel that is used in industrial applications and manufacturing processes including the production of steel, aluminum, and other specialty products. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) classifies fuel grade petcoke as a “traditional fuel” that has been historically managed as a “valuable fuel product.” Since first produced in the U.S. in the 1930s, petcoke has been safely transported by ocean freight, barges, rail and truck. In most locations, petcoke is staged outside in preparation for shipping domestically and internationally as permitted and is governed by federal and state environmental and safety regulations. The use of petcoke has enabled many North American businesses to remain competitive in the global marketplace while employing thousands of people in manufacturing jobs with good wages and benefits. Material Safety Data sheets for petcoke indicate it is non-toxic and non-carcinogenic and the EPA does not consider petroleum coke a hazardous product.