



Household Hazardous Waste Fact Sheet

Utah Department of Environmental Quality
Promoting a Healthy Environment

What is Household Hazardous Waste?

Many hazardous products and chemicals such as cleaners, oils and pesticides are used in the home every day. When discarded, these products are called household hazardous waste. To be considered hazardous they must be ignitable, corrosive, reactive, toxic or otherwise listed as hazardous by the federal Environmental Protection Agency. Products used and disposed of by a typical residence may contain more than 100 hazardous substances including:

- Batteries
- Cleaners
- Cosmetics
- Fluorescent light bulbs
- Glues
- Heating oil
- Insecticides and pesticides
- Ink
- Medicines
- Motor oil and automotive supplies
- Paints, thinners, stains and varnishes
- Polishes
- Swimming pool chemicals
- Smoke detectors
- Thermometers

Household Hazardous Waste is a Serious Threat

The average American household generates 20 pounds of household hazardous wastes yearly, according to EPA estimates.

Since chemicals found in household hazardous wastes can contaminate soil and groundwater, generate hazardous emissions at landfills and disrupt water treatment plants, it is important to properly dispose of them. Many solid waste treatment facilities are required to screen for household hazardous wastes to avoid operating under restrictive hazardous waste laws. Many communities also are required to establish household hazardous waste collection programs to qualify for storm water permits.

Safe Handling Tips

The best way to handle hazardous household materials completely using the product before disposing of containers. The next best alternative is returning unused portions on your community's household hazardous waste cleanup day. Keep products in original packages with all labels intact. If the container leaks, put it in a thick plastic bag. Pack the products in a plastic-lined cardboard box to prevent leaks and breakage.

Household hazardous waste cleanup days are for household wastes only. No industrial or commercial wastes and no containers larger than five gallons are accepted. Explosives, radioactive material and medical wastes are unacceptable.

Household hazardous wastes can be dangerous to people and pets who come in contact with them. They also can pollute water supplies, damage sewage treatment systems and cause other environmental damage. Use the products as directed.

DO NOT:

- Flush down the toilet
- Pour down the sink
- Pour down storm drains
- Pour on the ground

Contact your local health department or the Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste to determine whether your community has a household hazardous waste collection program.

Identify Household Hazardous Waste

Reduce the amount of potentially hazardous products in your home and eliminate what you throw away by following these easy steps:

1. Before you buy:

- Read labels and be aware of what they mean
- Look for these words on labels. They tell you what products may need special handling or disposal:

Caution	Flammable
Combustible	Poison
Corrosive	Toxic
Danger	Volatile
Explosive	Warning

- Select product best suited for the job
- Buy only what you need

2. After you buy:

- Read label precautions and follow directions for safe use
- Recycle or dispose of empty containers properly
- Share what you can't use with friends or neighbors
- Store properly
- Use recommended amounts. More is not necessarily better
- Use the child-resistant closures and keep them on tightly

For More Information, Contact:

Division of Solid & Hazardous Waste - (801) 538-6170
Environmental Hotline - 1 (800) 458-0145
Pollution Prevention Coordinator - (801) 536-4477