

# Household

## Hazardous Wastes



**CCME**

Canadian Council  
of Ministers  
of the Environment

Le Conseil canadien  
des ministres  
de l'environnement

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# WHAT ARE...

## Household Hazardous Wastes?

Most people are not sure what household hazardous wastes really are.

Hazardous wastes in the home usually arise from ordinary household products such as cleaning fluids, solvents and paints, or automotive and garden care products.

When a paint can or old battery is thrown away, the chemical substance or residue becomes a hazardous waste.

An easy way to familiarize yourself with most household hazardous wastes is to look on container labels for danger symbols. However, hazardous wastes such as crank case oil and oil-based paints will not be identified this way.

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# WHY

# IS...

## This Issue So Important?

Household hazardous wastes present serious environmental problems when disposed of:

- directly into the ground or open water bodies,
- into existing sewer systems, or
- at municipal landfills and waste disposal grounds.

Each of these unsatisfactory alternatives provide the means for harmful chemicals to enter the environment.

Contaminated land and water will seriously threaten our quality of life.

Serious injuries can occur to waste collectors and landfill operators from household hazardous wastes placed in the municipal waste stream.

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# WHAT CAN I DO...

## With My Hazardous Waste?

- Never bury or burn chemical containers containing residue.
- Don't buy more product than you need.
- Give excess quantities away to those who will use them instead of throwing them away.
- If you need to dispose of large quantities of hazardous waste, contact your local municipality or the Provincial Hazardous Waste Management office for advice.
- Participate in Household Hazardous Waste Days in your area.

Use the poster on the inside of this pamphlet for quick reference.

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# A Handy Guide to Household Hazardous Waste

## REDUCE

# 1

- Use up dangerous products rather than throwing them out.
- Don't purchase more products than you really need.
- Give leftovers to those who can use them, but keep in original container.
- Try non-toxic alternatives (see below).

## REUSE

# 2

- Many chemical products have alternative uses:
- Use old paint as primer.
  - Allow used turpentine to set in sealed jar until paint particles settle. Pour off clear liquid and use again.
  - Do not buy several products if one can do the job. General household cleaners can clean a variety of dirt. Check products labels.

## RECYCLE

# 3

- Used motor oil can be treated and used again.
- Batteries are accepted by many scrap yards.
- Commercial companies redistill solvents.

## RECOVER

# 4

- Separate hazardous materials from your household garbage.
- Do not dispose of hazardous materials in sewer systems or open bodies of water.
- Participate in your local Household Hazardous Waste Days.

## Pest Control



### ■ Aphids

Spray plants with a "bubble bath" of dish suds or soapy water. Rinse off when insects are dead.

### ■ Ants

Mix equal parts of powdered sugar and powdered borax together and sprinkle on the ant hill or burrow opening. Or, pour a line of cream of tartar, paprika, red chili powder or dried peppermint leaves at the point of entry.

### ■ Snail and Slug Killer

Fill a shallow pan with stale beer and place in the garden, or overturn clay pots to attract slugs. Collect and destroy.

### ■ Caterpillars

Use "stickum" made from 1½ cups rosin (from athletic supply store), 1 cup linseed oil, 1 tsp. melted paraffin. Paint around tree trunks.

■ Plant debris attracts pests and infected plants will breed them. Keep your garden clean.



## Lawn and Garden

Chemical fertilizers are fast-acting, short-term boosters which may deplete soil growth capacity with extended use. Try these simple alternatives:

- Peat moss, manure, fish meal.
- Start an organic compost pile.
- When cutting the lawn, try mulching the grass instead of using lawn mower bag.

Herbicides are dangerously toxic remedies for weed control. Try these solutions instead:

- Use organic gardening techniques.
- Pull weeds instead of using chemical control.
- In the fall, cover the garden with plastic to discourage weed germination.

## Common Hazardous Products In The Home

Class	Household Cleaning	Home Improvement	Lawn and Garden	Automotive
<p>CORROSIVE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Laundry and stain removers</li> <li>▪ Toilet cleaners</li> <li>▪ Floor wax stripper</li> <li>▪ Drain cleaners</li> <li>▪ Oven cleaners</li> <li>▪ Some bathroom cleaners</li> <li>▪ Bleach</li> <li>▪ Lye</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Muriatic acid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Most swimming pool chemicals</li> <li>▪ Roach killer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Acid batteries</li> </ul>
<p>FLAMMABLE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Methyl hydrate</li> <li>▪ Furniture cleaner</li> <li>▪ All aerosol cans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Acetone</li> <li>▪ Contact cement</li> <li>▪ Paint brush cleaner and solvents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Insect repellent</li> <li>▪ Camping fuel</li> <li>▪ Kerosene</li> <li>▪ All aerosol cans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All aerosol cans</li> <li>▪ Methyl hydrate</li> </ul>
<p>POISON</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Isopropyl alcohol</li> <li>▪ Batteries - Mercury and Nicad</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wood stain</li> <li>▪ Wood preservatives</li> <li>▪ Varnish remover</li> <li>▪ Turpentine</li> <li>▪ Paint thinner</li> <li>▪ Varsol</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dandelion, weed, insect and grass killer</li> <li>▪ Lawn fertilizer</li> <li>▪ Malathion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Radiator coolant and antifreeze</li> </ul>
<p>EXPLOSIVE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All aerosol cans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All aerosol cans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All aerosol cans</li> <li>▪ BBQ and camping fuel</li> <li>▪ Propane cylinders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All aerosol cans</li> </ul>

*The environment is our most precious resource;  
its future depends on how we treat it today.*



## Cleaning Agents

Prior to the "chemical revolution", householders used creative non-toxic remedies for everyday cleaning problems. Experiment with these:

- Baking soda is a non-abrasive scouring powder.
- Use vinegar and water for windows and smooth surfaces.
- For gleaming wood furniture, use 1 tbsp. melted carnauba wax mixed with 2 cups mineral oil, or dissolve 1 tsp. lemon oil in 2 cups mineral oil.
- Rub toothpaste on wood to remove water stains.
- Avoid aerosol products; mist particles can enter the blood stream. Use pump or spray bottles.
- Boil cinnamon and cloves in water on stove for "Potpourri" air freshener.
- Clean upholstery or carpet stains immediately with cold water or club soda.
- Open drains with metal snake or plunger. Keep drains clear with rinses of boiling water twice a week.



## Paint and Solvents

- Use latex or water-based paints whenever possible.
- Latex and water-based paints don't require thinners or solvents.
- Before disposing of oil-based or enamel paint cans, take outdoors, remove lid and allow the contents to air dry and harden, but ensure pets and children are kept away.



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