

Managing Household Hazardous Waste

Hazardous waste is a waste with properties that make it potentially dangerous or harmful to human health or the environment. Hazardous wastes can be liquids, solids, or contained gases. They can be the by-products of manufacturing processes, discarded used materials, or discarded unused commercial products. Household products can also be considered hazardous waste and should be properly identified, used, stored and disposed. These products are as common as paints, solvents, drain openers, oven cleaners, polishes, waxes, pesticides, cleaning agents or used automotive fluids. Limiting the purchase of products that could be or become hazardous waste is the most important step help safeguard your family's health and the environment. Hazardous wastes are identified by how flammable, corrosive, explosive or toxic they are.

In 1976 the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) gave the EPA the authority to control hazardous waste from the "cradle-to-grave." The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) requires that containers used to store hazardous waste on-site be clearly labeled. These labels contain key words to help you identify how toxic a product is. The most toxic products will contain the word, "Danger" while the least toxic products may contain the words, "Warning" or "Caution". Informed consumers may consider the use and the ultimate disposal of the less toxic products a better choice for their household. Unfortunately, household hazardous wastes are sometimes improperly disposed of leading to contamination of the soil, ground and surface water or the air you breathe. Improper storage of hazardous products such as cleaning substances can lead to accidental poisonings of children or pets. Know the products you are using by reading the label and understand the dangers of any potentially hazardous products or waste within the home.

Buying non-toxic or less toxic products reduce the amount of hazardous waste generated in your household. Also, buying only what you need to complete a project reduces the concern for the storage and disposal of these products. Consider donating to local charities or sharing with others in your community instead of storing leftover potentially hazardous products such as paints or cleaners. When attempting to dispose of household hazardous waste NEVER burn, bury, pour on the ground or down a drain, or discard them in your trash. These actions will lead to contaminating the environment and violate both state and federal regulations. You may find alternative disposal options in your community. Local agencies and business may have special collection events or disposal options for some household hazardous waste. The company, Earth991.com is recommended by the United States EPA to help search disposal locations near your zip code. Also, the Ohio EPA has a similar searching database along with information on disposal options for specific household hazardous wastes on their website. Contact the Meigs County Health Department or the local solid waste district to learn more about household hazardous waste.



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