

## PROPER DISPOSAL (Cont'd)

donate latex paint, contact your local government for guidance on disposing of the unwanted paint. Some counties run paint recycling programs. In some parts of the country, the local government prefers that paint be air-dried before disposal in trash, whereas this practice is discouraged in areas with air quality problems. This practice is forbidden in the State of California. If a steel can recycling program exists in your area, recycle the dry, empty paint cans.

Oil based paint is more difficult to dispose of and should always be taken to a special collection program. If none exists in your community, please contact your local government for guidance.

### ■ Paint Thinners & Other Products

Follow the disposal instructions on the label. Because pesticides and fertilizers are difficult to dispose of, try to share extra product with a neighbor or local community group (always in the original container). Otherwise, large amounts of unwanted pesticide or fertilizer should be taken to a household hazardous waste collection program.

In general, to dispose of less than a full container of a liquid pesticide, leave it in the original container with the cap tightly in place to prevent spills or leaks. Wrap the container in several layers of newspaper and tie it securely. For disposal of **dry** pesticides, wrap in several layers of newspaper (or place in a tight carton or bag), and tape or tie the package closed. Put the container or package in a covered trash can for routine trash collection. (NOTE: NO more than 1 gallon of liquid pesticide or 5 pounds of dry pesticides should be thrown out at one time.) These disposal precautions should also be taken with EMPTY pesticide and fertilizer containers. DO NOT store pesticides or fertilizers in your home for more than a few years. Dispose immediately either through a special collection program or in the trash.

### ■ Household Batteries

Household batteries contain small amounts of heavy metals (mercury and cadmium). Over the last decade the amount of heavy metals in most batteries has decreased substantially, due to environmental concerns. Button cell batteries used for hearing aids, watches, and cameras contain 30 to 40 percent mercury, and are being recycled in most areas. Rechargeable batteries are almost always recyclable, and will sometimes be collected by the store who sold them. Also, there may be a recycling program for alkaline batteries in your community. Ask the store where you purchased them if they are participating in the recycling program. Alkaline batteries can be disposed of in the trash.

Remember, the key to using and handling household hazardous products are:

- Read and follow the label instructions
- Use only the amount you need
- Use it up or give it to someone who can
- Dispose of it properly
- Help CEF protect the health and safety of your community and your environment



THE CHEMICAL EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

# PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP BULLETIN

## Chemicals in Your Home

A *Solutions* Publication brought to you by the Chemical Education Foundation

*How to Handle Household Hazardous Products and Waste*



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The Responsible Management of Chemicals.*

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**H**ousehold chemical products have become a necessity.

*They protect us from disease and contribute to our high standards of living. It is important to remember that the products we use to clean, disinfect, and maintain our homes, clothing, dishes, furnishings, etc., are designed for safe use, storage, and disposal in the home. If they are used or disposed of improperly, some of these products could harm human health and the environment.*

*As with all the materials in our homes, there are proper ways and improper ways to use and dispose of different types of chemical products. The purpose of this brochure is to help direct consumers as to the proper use and disposal of chemical household products and waste.*

## LOVE YOUR LABELS

### READ & FOLLOW THE LABEL INSTRUCTIONS

Look for signal words on labels such as “Danger,” “Poison,” “Warning,” or “Caution.” Substances that are poisonous, corrosive, or flammable will be clearly labeled. Use, store, and dispose of them carefully.

NEVER remove the label or transfer the product into another container, unless the container is intended to be refillable and is properly labeled. Usually, the product label contains all the information consumers need to know about how to protect themselves and the environment when using potentially hazardous products.

## WEAR PROPER PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

When using products that contain hazardous materials, check the label to see if you should protect yourself by wearing gloves, aprons, safety glasses, etc.

## PLAN YOUR PURCHASES

Buy the right amount of product for the job, follow the directions carefully, and only use products for their intended use. Share or donate any excess products. For example, consider donating unused paint to local civic, church, or theater groups; leftover pesticides or fertilizers might be given to your neighbor, local garden club, or park service. Ensure that any product given away is in its original container with the label intact and legible.

## STORE PROPERLY

Keep products in their original container for easy identification. Store products securely, out of the reach of children and pets, and follow label directions about exposure to light, heat, or cold.

## HANDLE PROPERLY

Never mix waste materials together, and never use unknown chemicals. Never mix products with bleach.

## PROPER DISPOSAL (GENERAL)

- Products that go down the drain in the course of normal use (e.g. sink, tub, tile, drain, and all-purpose cleaners) can be disposed of by flushing them down the drain with plenty of water. Dispose of each product separately, small amounts at a time.
- Recycle empty containers if they are accepted by your recycling program.
- NEVER dispose of any materials by leaving or burying them in the yard, street, gutter, a roadside dump, or by pouring them on the ground or down a storm drain.
- Do not use an indoor or outdoor fireplace or barbeque as a waste in incinerator, and NEVER burn or put aerosol cans or other sealed containers into a trash compactor.
- Do not keep old materials in your home. If you cannot find a household hazardous waste collection program, call the manufacturer for recycling or disposal recommendations, or follow instructions issued by your local government.

*NOTE: Some communities may have recycling programs for certain types of empty containers. These programs may vary from community to community. Be sure to check with your local government on what your program will accept for recycling.*

*This advice applies to all references to recycling contained in this brochure.*

## PROPER DISPOSAL (SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS)

### AUTOMOTIVE PRODUCTS

#### ■ Antifreeze, Windshield Washer Fluids, Transmission Fluid, Gasoline, Kerosene, & Diesel Fuel

Pets and children are attracted to the sweet taste of antifreeze. Ingesting automobile antifreeze or windshield fluids can be fatal, so be sure to store them in a safe place, and never pour antifreeze on the ground or down a storm drain. Some communities and automotive service centers recycle antifreeze and other automotive fluids. In addition, most household hazardous waste collection sites will accept antifreeze and windshield washer fluids.

#### ■ Motor Oil

Recycle these products at an automotive service center, oil recycling station, or local government collection site. Products such as motor oil can be re-refined to reclaim its original properties or recycled into other grades of fuel oil. DO NOT pour leftover product or container rinse water on the ground or down storm drains. DO NOT pour anything other than motor oil into motor oil collection tanks.

#### ■ Lead Acid Batteries

There are many ways and opportunities to recycle vehicle or marine batteries, which may contain lead and sulfuric acid. Most retail stores that sell automotive or marine batteries accept used batteries for recycling. When buying a new battery, ask if they will take your old battery. (This advice goes for all automotive parts!) **NOTE: Lead batteries are banned from most municipal landfills.**

### HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS

#### ■ Cleaning and Polishing Products

Many household liquid cleaners can be poured down the drain with plenty of water. However, check the label before disposing. Place the empty container in the trash or recycling bin; rinse if necessary. Always follow instructions.

Empty packages that contained solids, powders, or crystals can be placed in the trash or recycling bin.

Empty aerosol cans, such as oven cleaners and household polishes, can be recycled with other steel materials if safely drained. If recycling is not available, close the container tightly and wrap in newspaper for disposal in your trash. DO NOT attempt to puncture and drain aerosol cans at home.

#### ■ Paints and Other Coatings

There are two types of paints – water based (latex) and oil based – each of which is disposed of differently. If you are unable to