



Disposing Household Hazardous Waste



We use household hazardous products everyday in cleaning and fixing of our homes, maintaining our cars, and taking care of our lawns. Products such as oil based paints, weed killers, and drain opener are okay when they are used for what they were intended. If these products are not properly stored, and disposed of, they can present a hazard to our health and our environment.

**BEST PRACTICE AREA:
ENVIRONMENTALLY
PREFERRED PURCHASING**

**BEST PRACTICE AREA:
PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP**

**BEST PRACTICE AREA:
WASTE REDUCTION**

DID YOU KNOW?

According to national estimates, each home contains from three to eight gallons of hazardous materials in kitchens, bathrooms, garages, and basements.

CHECK WITH YOUR COUNTY

Counties will often sponsor or have links to hazardous waste and appliance drop-off sites and events. In the St. Cloud area, the Tri-County Solid Waste Management Dept. will collect household hazardous wastes and dispose of them properly. Tri-County also has a mobile unit that travels around the counties to pick up waste items.

MEDICAL WASTE? SHARPS?

While sharps (used needles) have become commonly known as hazardous waste for some time, other medical waste also can be hazardous. Used and bloody bandages, needles, some latex gloves, some containers and human and animal tissue can all carry diseases to other people or animals. Proper disposal of these items will kill any pathogens.

Another commonly disposed medical waste is unused medications. Depositing unused medications into the landfills allows them to slowly be absorbed into the soils, affecting the groundwater supply and ultimately into our drinking water. A more direct route into the water supply is when unused medications are thrown down the drain or into the toilet. When people drink the water, they are exposed to a small amount of the medication ultimately compromising our natural ability to fight off diseases and the medication's ability to work in the future.

SOME COMMON HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE PRODUCTS:

- Adhesives
- Aerosols
- Automotive Chemicals
- Cleaners
- Fuels
- Fluorescent Bulbs
- Garden Chemicals, fertilizers & pesticides
- Mercury
- Mothballs
- Paints
- Poison
- Appliances
- Antifreeze
- Electronics
- Explosives
- Medical Waste
- Pharmaceutical Waste
- Tires
- Motor Oil
- Sealers
- Solvents
- Roofing Tar
- Pool Chemicals

DANGERS OF HAZARDOUS WASTE PRODUCTS:

Improper disposal of household hazardous waste poses grave risks to the environment, plants, animals and human beings. The most immediate effects of improper hazardous waste disposal is the killing of plants and animals. Wildlife may ingest or come into contact with paints, mercury, motor oil, chemicals and other wastes that would work as poisons. Other animals may eat the animals affected and ingest the poisons. Human beings are most often indirectly affected by improper disposal of hazardous wastes indirectly. Leaking waste products may pollute surface and ground water resources, thereby affecting drinking water. In addition, as plants and animals ingest hazardous waste products, humans who eat those plants and animals also become affected.

IMPROPER DISPOSAL OF HAZARDOUS WASTES CAN LEAD TO A MYRIAD OF HEALTH PROBLEMS INCLUDING:

- Kidney damage & poisoning
- Cancer
- Brain Damage
- Neurological Disorders
- Skin lesions
- Liver failure
- Birth defects
- Renal failure
- Internal bleeding
- Gastrointestinal Disorders
- Diabetes
- Many others...

