



ANR-790-1.2.3

ALABAMA A & M AND AUBURN UNIVERSITIES

## Protecting Water Quality Disposing Of Household Chemical Wastes

**P**roducts found in your kitchen, bathroom, garage, workshop, or garden shed may be hazardous. This means that these products can poison, corrode, explode, or burst into flame if not handled properly. When you place these products in the trash or pour them down drains, the chemicals can injure others or contaminate drinking water sources.

The average household has about 5.5 pounds of hazardous waste to dispose of annually. Among the most common materials are motor oil, paint, pesticides, cleaning products, and batteries. Collectively, these materials can poison our water if they are not used correctly, stored carefully, and disposed of properly.

### What Is The Best Way To Dispose Of Potentially Hazardous Household Products?

The best advice is, don't. If you cannot use up the product, think of someone who can. A neighbor, school, youth group, church, or service organization may be glad to share your remaining cleaning solution, paint, fertilizer, gasoline, or insect spray. When you shop, buy only those house, yard, and automobile products you need and purchase in quantities that you will use up. Finally, consider buying safe substitutes for potentially hazardous products.

**Motor Oil.** An auto service or repair station—or any station that changes oil—may accept used motor oil for recycling.

To dispose of used motor oil, which contains hazardous petroleum products, first drain the oil through a funnel into a clean container that can be tightly sealed. Then deliver it to your local recycling center. The local health department, chamber of commerce, or Extension office can help you find the nearest center that accepts used motor oil.

**Pesticides.** Homeowners often store unused pesticides for many years. Pesticides may deteriorate when stored for a long period and labels

may become unreadable. Discard or relabel anything that cannot be identified.

To dispose of a container with less than 1 quart of a liquid formulation, leave it in the original container, with cap securely in place to prevent spills or leaks. Wrap container in several layers of newspaper and tie securely and place in a covered trash can for routine collection. Liquid in containers up to a gallon should be poured onto an absorbent material such as dry kitty litter, clay soil, or sawdust, then shoveled into a plastic bag, and placed in trash.

Wrap individual packages of dry pesticides such as granules or dust formulations in several layers of newspaper and place in a plastic bag; tie or tape closed and then place in routine trash collection.

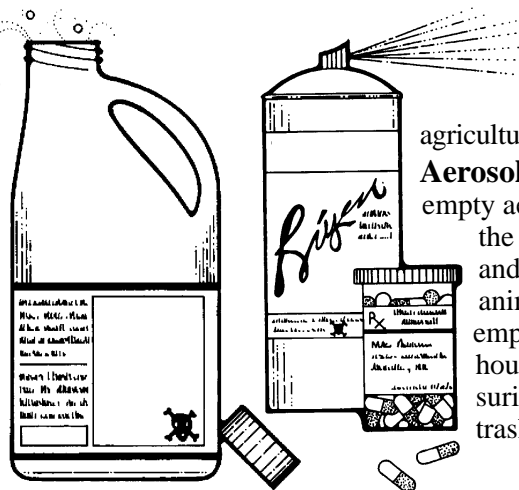
Empty pesticide containers should be triple rinsed and the rinse water used as spray material for pest control purposes. Empty triple-rinsed containers can be placed in household trash collection.

Never flush waste pesticides down a drain or toilet. Attempt to give excess containers of pesticides to neighbors for their use according to labeled directions.

Pesticides that have been banned by EPA may be on the Hazardous Waste List and cannot be placed in household trash. For specific instructions on banned pesticides or pesticides classified as Hazardous Waste,

contact your state pesticide education specialist through the county Extension office or call your state department of agriculture or state environmental agency.

**Aerosols.** Discard only completely empty aerosol cans. Before discarding the cans, spray the contents outside and away from human beings or animals until the can is completely empty. Then discard the can with household refuse. Never put pressurized cans, even empty ones, in a trash compactor or incinerator.



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## Key To Disposal Instructions

The following chart recommends disposal methods for potentially hazardous products that you may have in your home. When more than one disposal method is given, the first is preferred. Choose another method only when the first is not feasible.

**Household Refuse.** Discard with household refuse that is carried to a sanitary landfill or municipal incinerator. Rinse empty containers well with water before you discard them.

**Wrapped Refuse.** Wrap in newspaper and then in plastic before you add it to house refuse.

**Small Amount Down Drain.** Pour small quantities (less than one-third of the container) down the drain

(or toilet) on a city sewer using plenty of water; rinse the container thoroughly, then discard it as household refuse. If the capacity of the sewage or septic system is small or if large amounts are to be disposed, recycle.

**Solidify/Double Wrap.** Solidify with absorbent material such as kitty litter, sawdust, charcoal, or dry soil. Allow the material to dry, then double wrap it in plastic and discard it with household refuse.

**Evaporate/Double Wrap.** Allow the chemical to evaporate outside away from children or pets; double wrap the container in plastic; then discard it with household refuse.

**Special Recycling Center.** Take the product to a special recycling facility or return it to its manufacturer.

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## Disposal Recommendations For Household Chemical Wastes

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Item	Disposal Instructions (Use key above)
<i><b>Personal Care</b></i>	
Cosmetics.....	Household refuse
Hair permanent solution .....	Small amount down drain
Hair straightener.....	Small amount down drain
Medicines, liquid* .....	Small amount down drain
Medicines, nonliquid .....	Small amount down drain
	Wrapped refuse
Nail polish .....	Solidify/double wrap
	Evaporate/double wrap
Nail polish remover.....	Evaporate/double wrap
Perfume.....	Small amount down drain
Shaving lotion.....	Small amount down drain
	Solidify/double wrap
Shoe polish.....	Household refuse
Shoe dye.....	Household refuse
<i><b>Home Care And Maintenance</b></i>	
Batteries (D cell or smaller).....	Special recycling center
Mercury .....	Special recycling center
	Wrapped refuse
Nickel-cadmium .....	Wrapped refuse
Hearing aid.....	Household refuse
Cleaners: (Do not mix chlorine and ammonia-base cleaners.)	
Ammonia base .....	Small amount down drain
Basin, tub, tile.....	Small amount down drain
Bleach .....	Small amount down drain
Drain (lye base)*.....	Small amount down drain
Powder/abrasive .....	Household refuse
Mildew (fungicide).....	Wrapped refuse
Oven (lye base)* .....	Small amount down drain
Toilet bowl* .....	Small amount down drain
Upholstery/rug (detergent base) .....	Small amount down drain
Upholstery/rug (solvent base).....	Evaporate/double wrap

Window .....	Small amount down drain
Disinfectants* .....	Small amount down drain
Dry cleaning fluid .....	Evaporate/double wrap
Fiberglass (epoxy resin) .....	Solidify resin and hardener, then treat as wrapped refuse
Fluorescent lamp ballast .....	Household refuse
(manufactured prior to 1978 or with label stating it contains no PCBs)	
Glue (solvent base) .....	Evaporate/double wrap
Glue (water base) .....	Evaporate/double wrap
Mothballs .....	Household refuse
Paint or stain	
Latex .....	Evaporate/double wrap
	Solidify/double wrap
Oil .....	Special recycling center
Primer .....	Household refuse
Rust .....	Solidify/double wrap
Stain .....	Solidify/double wrap
Varnish .....	Solidify/double wrap
Paint remover .....	Evaporate/double wrap
Paint thinner .....	Evaporate/double wrap
Paintbrush cleaner (phosphate base)* .....	Small amount down drain
Paintbrush cleaner (solvent base) .....	Solidify/double wrap
Paint/varnish stripper (lye base) .....	Solidify/double wrap
Polish	
Copper .....	Evaporate/double wrap
Floor .....	Solidify/double wrap
Furniture .....	Solidify/double wrap
Silver .....	Solidify/double wrap
	Evaporate/double wrap
Rust remover (phosphoric acid base) .....	Small amount down drain
Smoke detector (ionization type) .....	Special recycling center
	Return to manufacturer
Spot remover (solvent base) .....	Evaporate/double wrap
Turpentine .....	Evaporate/double wrap
<b><i>Automobile And Motor Care:</i></b>	
Antifreeze .....	Special recycling center
Automatic transmission fluid .....	Special recycling center
Batteries .....	Special recycling center
Brake fluid .....	Special recycling center
Carburetor cleaner .....	Evaporate/double wrap
Degreasing chemicals .....	Evaporate/double wrap
Diesel fuel .....	Special recycling center
Enamel .....	Evaporate/double wrap
Fuel oil .....	Special recycling center
Gasoline .....	Evaporate/double wrap
Kerosene .....	Special recycling center
Light lubricating oil .....	Special recycling center
Motor oil .....	Special recycling center
Polish or wax	
Automobile .....	Evaporate/double wrap
Chrome (solvent base) .....	Evaporate/double wrap
Windshield washer fluid .....	Small amount down drain

**Lawn And Garden Care:**

Fertilizer (liquid, less than 1 gal) .....	Use on lawn or wrapped refuse
Fertilizer (less than 5 pounds dry; less than 25 pounds of combined lawn fertilizer/pesticide).....	Use or wrapped refuse
Pesticides, fungicides.....	Wrapped refuse
Poison (rat/mouse, arsenic base) .....	Wrapped refuse
Poison (rat/mouse, warfarin base) .....	Wrapped refuse
Roach/ant killer.....	Wrapped refuse
Flea collar .....	Wrapped refuse
Weed killers .....	Wrapped refuse
Garden insecticides.....	Wrapped refuse

\*Use special caution when disposing into septic system

**Tips For Disposing Of Household Chemical Wastes**

- Buy only what you need and use up the products.
- Substitute nontoxic substances whenever possible.
- Use collection days for household chemical wastes whenever possible. If your community does not have a collection day or recycling center for chemical wastes, talk with your community leaders about organizing one.
  - Recycle remaining materials.
  - Read labels carefully and observe the precautions for use; follow the recommendations for disposal.
  - Avoid mixing wastes; this could create a violent reaction or form a more hazardous product.
  - Dispose of liquid wastes properly, not in drains, storm sewers, or in the trash.
  - Discard **small** quantities of household wastes at one time.
  - Bury household wastes **only if** you have obtained a permit from your local health department or environmental agency.

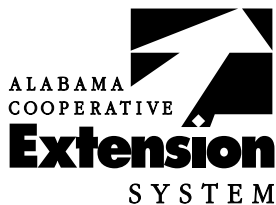
**Conclusion**

Some communities sponsor clean up/collection days for collecting common hazardous waste materials from neighborhoods. Among the most common materials collected are motor oil, paint, pesticides, cleaning products, and batteries. By participating in or sponsoring clean up/collection days, you can encourage people to cleanup their own property and to remove old or unwanted, potentially dangerous materials from their homes.

**Reference**

Disposal Of Household Hazardous Waste. 1989. Washington State University. Pullman, WA.

The suggestions contained in this publication advise safe disposal of products using the best technology available at the current time. The authors assume no liability for the effectiveness or results of the procedures described.



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**For more information**, call your county Extension office. Look in your telephone directory under your county's name to find the number.

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