

Household Hazardous Waste

What is Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)?

Anything that is labeled toxic, flammable, corrosive, reactive, infectious, or radioactive can threaten personal health and safety if used improperly or disposed of improperly. Many home and garden products contain potentially dangerous chemicals. Examples of hazardous products are cleaners, gasoline, motor oil, paint, solvents, swimming pool chemicals and pesticides.

Facts about Household Hazardous Waste:

According to national estimates, each home contains from three to eight gallons of hazardous materials in kitchens, bathrooms, garages and basements. 180 million gallons of motor oil are improperly disposed of in streams, sewers or on the ground each year in the US - the equivalent of 16 Exxon Valdez oil spills. If just 1% of US families cut their hazardous waste in half, we'd keep 7.3 million pounds of hazardous waste out of our landfills and waterways each year.

Planning a Household Hazardous Waste Prevention Education Program

Promotion: this is the most critical element to a successful program. Put a lot of thought into this. Identify the specific audience you want to reach. Tailor your message to that audience. What are the appropriate media that will reach your audience: print, radio, TV, traveling displays? Look for opportunities to piggyback on existing events, e.g. composting workshop, Home Improvement Show, Neighborhood Clean-up Day.

The three most important messages to get across in your program:

1. Shop Smart, buy only what you need;
2. Buy the least toxic alternative;
3. Practice safe disposal.

Ideas to use in your program on how to minimize hazardous waste in the home:

1. Use safer alternatives
2. Read labels before purchasing. Watch for the words "caution", "warning", and "danger". Follow label directions.
3. Buy only what you need and will use up.
4. If you do have products left over, give them to friends, neighbors, or charitable institutions to use up.

Coordinate your campaign with scheduled household hazardous waste collection days: Your community may be among those holding a household hazardous waste Collection Event, where residents can bring unused and unwanted hazardous substances to a central location for proper sorting and disposal by local officials and hazardous waste collectors.

To find out locations and dates of planned household hazardous waste collection events in Oregon, call (800) 732-9253.

Background Documentation

- "The Hazardless Home Handbook. A Guide to Hazardous Household Products and Effective Alternatives," a cooperative publication of Metro & DEQ. This is a 34 page booklet with a detailed guide to common hazardous household products. To obtain a copy, call DEQ at (800) 452-4011 (within Oregon), or Metro at (503) 234-3000. To visit Metro's website: <http://www.metro.dst.or.us/metro>
- "What is Household Hazardous Waste?", 1998. A flyer produced by DEQ with specific information on different products and their uses. To obtain a copy, call DEQ at (800) 452-4011 (within Oregon).
- "Beyond the Bin. Saving Resources, Saving Money", a brochure by DEQ. To obtain a copy, call DEQ at (800) 452-4011 (within Oregon).
- "Household Hazardous Waste Minimizer", a newsletter published by DEQ. To receive a copy or have your name added to the mailing list, call DEQ at (800) 452-4011 (within Oregon).
- "Household Hazardous Waste: 'HHW,'" a webpage by Yamhill County at <http://co.yamhill.or.us/solwas/HHW.htm>.
- Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides (NCAP) at <http://www.efn.org/~ncap/>.
- Website of Long Beach, Ca. at <http://www.ci.long-beach.ca.us/irb/index.htm>.



State of Oregon
Department of
Environmental
Quality

**Waste Prevention
And Management**
811 SW 6th Avenue
Portland, OR 97204
Phone: (503) 229-5913
(800) 452-4011
Fax: (503) 229-6954
www.deq.state.or.us

Referrals to existing programs

- The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, in cooperation with local governments, has conducted household hazardous waste collection events throughout Oregon since 1991. For more information call DEQ at (503) 229-5913, or toll-free within Oregon at (800) 452-4011. Ask for household hazardous waste information.
- Portland Metropolitan Region, Metro. Oregon residents from outside the Metro area may use the two permanent household hazardous waste facilities in the Portland area if they obtain a voucher from DEQ or Metro. Call (503) 234-3000 or (800) 732-9253 to obtain a voucher. For information about location and hours of operation, call Metro Recycling Information at (503) 234-3000.
- Benton County. Corvallis Disposal holds a free annual household hazardous waste collection event, usually in the spring. Call Corvallis Disposal at (541) 754-0444 for more information.
- Lane County. Households and conditionally exempt generators can take hazardous waste to a facility located at the Glenwood Central Receiving Station in Eugene. Call the Lane County Waste Management Division at (541) 682-4119 for more information.
- Linn County. Albany-Lebanon Sanitation holds a free annual household hazardous waste collection event, usually in the fall. Call Albany-Lebanon Sanitation at (541) 928-2551 for more information.
- Medford/Ashland. Rogue Valley Disposal and Ashland Sanitary hold an annual household hazardous waste collection in the spring. Call Rogue Valley Disposal at (541) 799-4161 or Ashland Sanitary at (541) 482-1471 for more information.
- Tillamook County. Tillamook County holds an annual household hazardous waste collection event in the fall for county residents only in Tillamook, Pacific City and Manzanita. Call (503) 842-3419 for more information.



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