

**ABOUT  
HAZARDOUS  
PRODUCTS  
IN THE HOME**

# NEARLY EVERY HOME CONTAINS HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

MANY ARE FOUND  
IN PRODUCTS WE  
USE ALL THE TIME,  
SUCH AS:

- cleansers
- automotive fluids
- beauty products
- lawn-care chemicals.

Toxic Corrosive  
FLAMMABLE IRRITANT

## A MATERIAL IS CONSIDERED HAZARDOUS IF IT'S:

- TOXIC (can injure or kill if swallowed, inhaled or absorbed through the skin)
- FLAMMABLE (may explode or ignite, even when cool)
- CORROSIVE (can cause permanent tissue damage through contact)
- IRRITANT (can irritate or inflame the skin, eyes, nose, throat or lungs).



# YOU NEED TO USE EXTRA CARE

when handling hazardous household materials.  
Proper storage, use and disposal go a long way  
in helping protect:



## YOUR HEALTH

Repeated or excessive contact  
with hazardous household  
materials may lead to:

- lung problems
- brain and nerve damage
- depression
- cancer
- death.

Pregnant women who have  
repeated or excessive contact  
with these materials may risk birth  
defects in their unborn babies.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

Our water, soil and air are all  
threatened unless proper disposal  
methods are used.



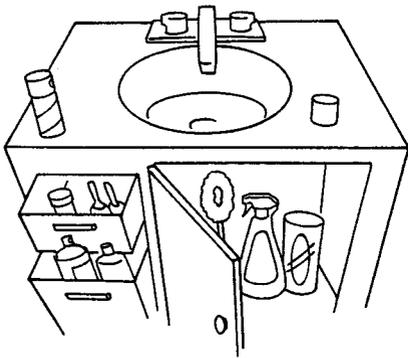
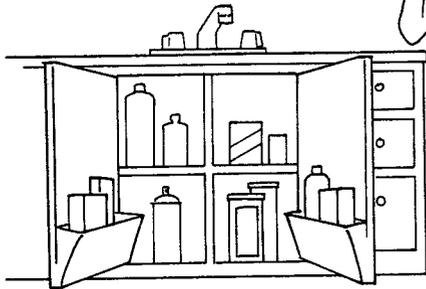
Fortunately, there's a lot you can do  
to minimize the hazards! Learn more...

# HOW MANY HAZARDOUS PRODUCTS ARE IN YOUR HOME?

Probably a lot!  
Here are some of  
the most common:

## KITCHEN

- oven cleaner
- drain cleaner
- floor-care products.



## BATHROOM

- toilet cleaner
- aerosol deodorant
- polish remover
- some cosmetics
- hair color
- medications.

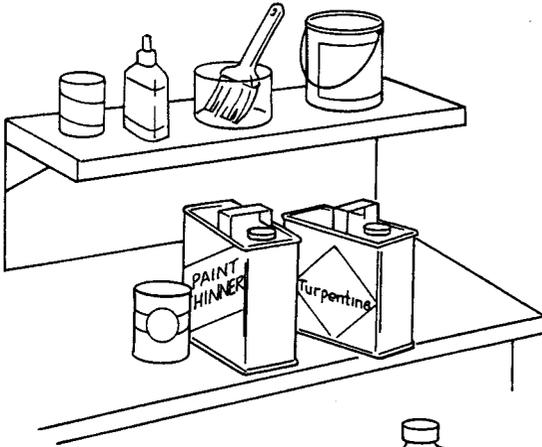
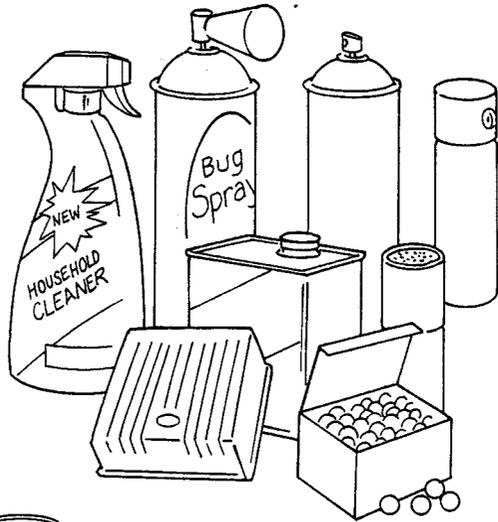
## LAUNDRY ROOM

- detergent
- chlorine bleach
- spot remover
- softener
- spray starch.



## GENERAL HOUSEHOLD

- ammonia-based cleaner
- furniture polish
- mothballs
- some air fresheners
- insecticides
- flea and tick powder
- metal cleaner
- household batteries.

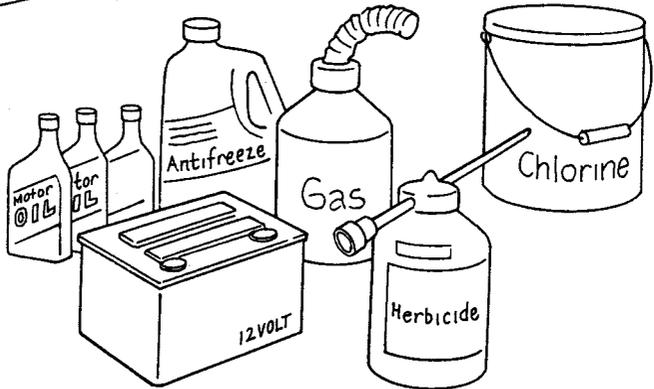


## WORKSHOP

- paint
- glue
- varnish
- paint thinner
- turpentine.

## GARAGE

- motor oil
- gasoline
- antifreeze
- car batteries
- lighter fluid
- pool chemicals
- herbicides.

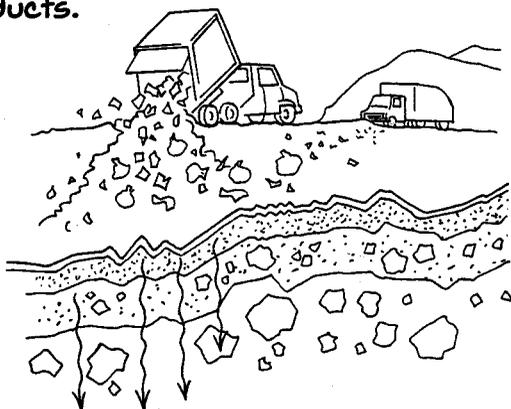


# KNOW THE FACTS

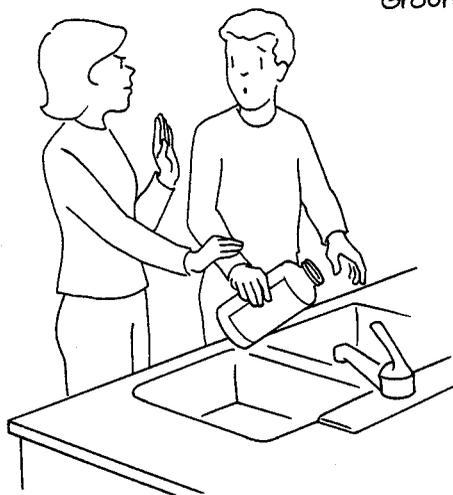
about handling and disposing of hazardous household products.

## WHAT YOU THROW AWAY CAN COME BACK TO HAUNT YOU

Most trash ends up in a landfill. Hazardous materials may then seep into the ground and contaminate our soil and drinking water supply. And waste that is burned in an incinerator can pollute the air.



Ground water

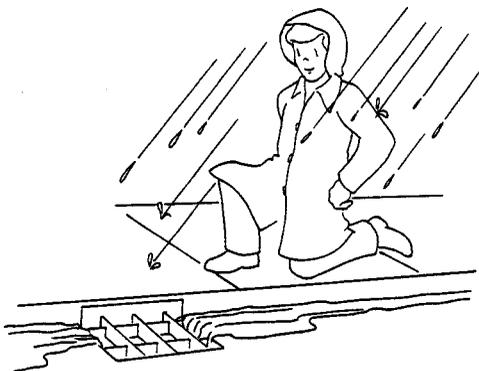


## MOST CHEMICALS SHOULD NOT BE FLUSHED DOWN THE DRAIN

Hazardous chemicals that can't be removed or broken down by water treatment plants may end up in nearby lakes, rivers and streams. Hazardous chemicals in septic systems can affect the health of the soil nearby -- and make the septic system less efficient.

## STORM DRAINS ARE FOR RAIN

In many areas, these drains feed into streams, ponds and lakes. Chemical waste dumped into storm drains usually goes untreated. It can harm plants and wildlife and end up in our drinking water.



## **AEROSOLS POLLUTE THE AIR WE BREATHE**

Chemicals used in spray can products add to smog. And aerosols often contain dangerous chemicals, such as methylene chloride, which can cause cancer and nerve damage.



## **APPLIANCES MAY CONTAIN HIDDEN HAZARDS**

If not disposed of properly, some appliances may pollute the environment with hazardous materials. For example, many older refrigerators and air conditioners use freon, a gas that can further damage the ozone layer if released into the air.

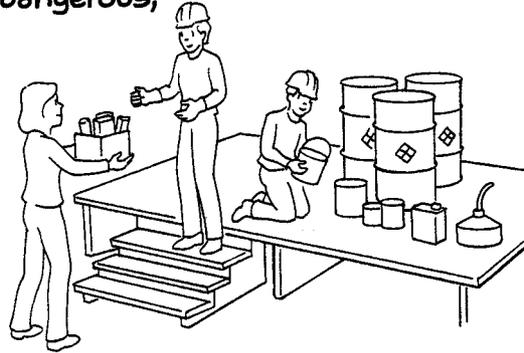
**Hazardous waste is a serious problem.  
But you can be part of the solution. Read on ...**

# USE SAFE DISPOSAL METHODS

Improper disposal is not only dangerous, it may be illegal in your area.

## TAKE PART IN HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION DAYS

Some communities hold these events once or twice a year. Many types of waste are accepted.



## LOOK FOR OTHER COLLECTION SITES

There may be a facility in your area that accepts hazardous waste year round. Call your local health or public works department for information.

## FOLLOW LABEL INSTRUCTIONS

Some products can be put out with the trash (dried paint, for example). If you're not sure, call your water treatment plant or department of public works.



## CONTACT A PRIVATE DISPOSAL COMPANY

For a fee, some licensed collectors will safely dispose of your hazardous waste. Look in the Yellow Pages, under "Waste Disposal." (This is usually a very expensive option.)

# PLAY IT SAFE IN OTHER WAYS, TOO

Disposal may not be the only — or best — solution. In some cases, you can:



## RECYCLE IT

Many hazardous materials can be broken down and used to make new products. For example, some service stations will accept used automotive fluids, batteries and tires. Look for other recycling centers in your area.

## USE IT UP

This is a simple way to avoid creating waste. Many household products have a long shelf life and may still work well years after they were bought.



## GIVE IT AWAY

Friends, neighbors or community organizations may be able to use products you no longer need.

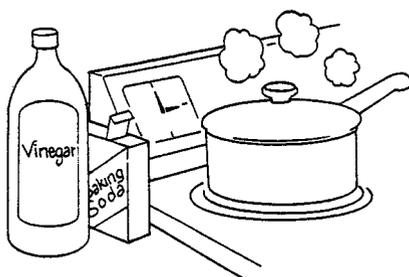
**It may seem easier just to throw these products away. But careless disposal of hazardous wastes is hard on our planet — and our health!**

# CONSIDER SAFER ALTERNATIVES

to hazardous products. They're usually just as effective as formulas you buy in the store. Here are a few examples:

## OVEN CLEANER

Scour with baking soda and water. To prevent grease buildup, always clean spills as soon as the oven cools down.

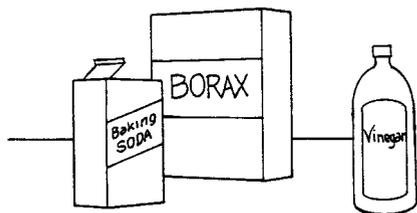
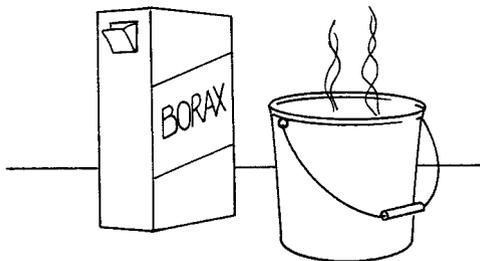


## DRAIN CLEANER

Dissolve 1/2 cup of baking soda and a cup of vinegar in boiling water. Pour the mixture into the drain. A plunger can also help get things moving.

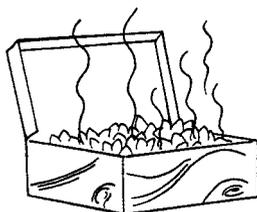
## ALL-PURPOSE CLEANER

Mix 1 teaspoon of borax in 1 quart of warm water for counters, tabletops and other surfaces. Baking soda and water works great in the bathroom.



## LAUNDRY DETERGENT

Try borax or baking soda. Add a few drops of vinegar to keep colors bright.

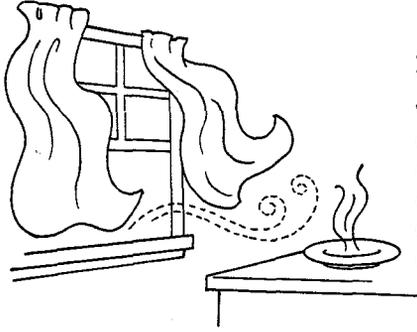
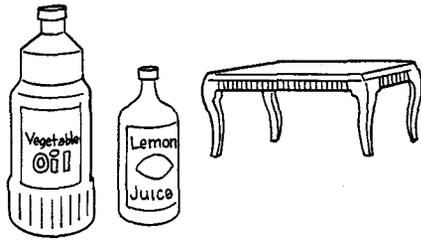


## MOTHBALLS

Cedar chips and lavender flowers are great-smelling and safe.

## FURNITURE POLISH

Mix 2 parts vegetable oil with 1 part lemon juice. Wipe with a soft, clean cloth.

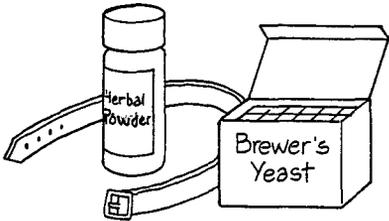


## AIR FRESHENERS

Ventilate to keep household air fresh. When weather permits, leave windows and doors open for a few minutes each day. Place saucers of vinegar around the house to absorb odors. (Locate them carefully – out of the reach of children and pets, where they won't be spilled, etc.)

## TOILET BOWL CLEANER

Sprinkle the bowl with baking soda. Pour a small amount of vinegar on the toilet brush and scrub.



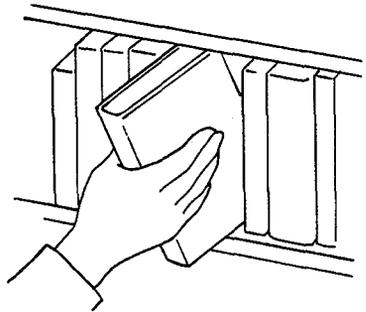
## FLEA POWDER

Herbal powders and collars are available in health food stores and some pet stores. Top your pet's food with brewer's yeast (once in the blood, it can keep fleas from biting).

## CHECK YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY

for books that list other safe alternatives to hazardous products. You can find safe ways to:

- control weeds and garden pests
- polish silver and other metals
- clean upholstery and carpeting.



**Just about any household task can be accomplished with nonhazardous products!**

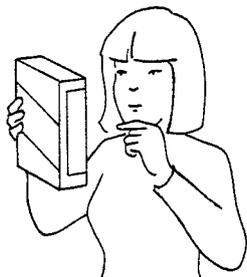
# FOLLOW THESE SAFETY RULES

if you do need to use a hazardous product:

## READ THE LABEL BEFORE YOU BUY

Products won't be labeled "hazardous," so look for these signal words:

- POISON (highly toxic)
- DANGER (highly toxic, flammable or corrosive)
- WARNING (moderately toxic)
- CAUTION (slightly toxic).



## BUY ONLY WHAT YOU NEED

Don't buy more than you think you'll use. This will save you the trouble of having to dispose of waste material. Before you buy, check to see if there's a safer alternative.



## USE THE RIGHT AMOUNT

Remember -- you won't get twice the results by using twice as much. Follow label directions.



## DON'T MIX PRODUCTS

Mixing products can cause an explosion or other dangerous chemical reaction. Always follow label instructions.



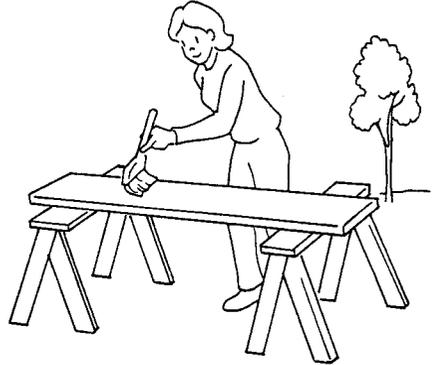
## WEAR PROPER PROTECTION

Use protective equipment to guard yourself against injury or illness. Equipment may include gloves, goggles, rubber boots, a mask, etc. Check the label for specific information.



## ENSURE GOOD VENTILATION

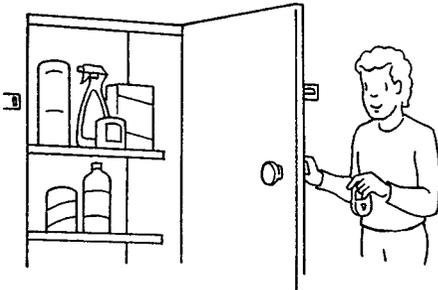
When working with toxic vapors (from paint, varnish, etc.), keep windows and doors open. Work outside, if possible. Remove contact lenses before starting -- they can trap vapors against the eye.



## STORE PRODUCTS SAFELY

Cool, dry, well-ventilated areas are best. To help prevent accidents:

- Seal lids and caps tightly.
- Store products in a secure area, away from children and pets.
- Make sure all products are clearly labeled. Store them in their original containers, if possible.



## ALWAYS CLEAN UP AFTERWARDS

Wash tools and surfaces after you finish working. Wash your hands carefully, too.

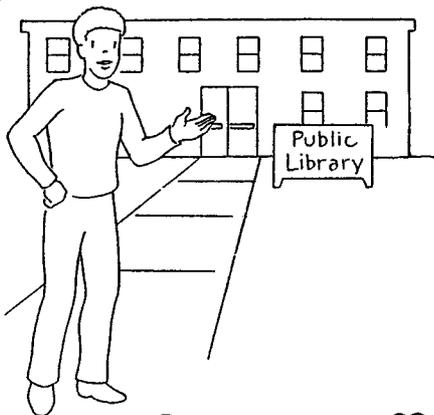


## WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

Here are a few ideas:

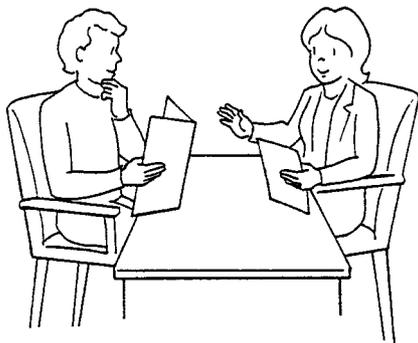
### **FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HAZARDOUS HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS**

Being well-informed can help you make safe, responsible decisions. Your public library is a good place to start.



### **TALK TO LOCAL OFFICIALS**

Contact the coordinator of your local recycling program or hazardous household waste program. You can also call your local health department or public works department.



### **SUPPORT HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION PROGRAMS**

If there's no program in your area, find out how to start one. Call the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Hotline at 1-800-424-9346. Or, call your public works department.

### **DEMAND SAFER PRODUCTS**

Contact manufacturers and retailers, and voice your concerns about hazardous ingredients in the products you use.



**So--**

# **HELP SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF HAZARDOUS HOUSEHOLD WASTE!**

**✓ LEARN THE  
SAFE WAY**

to use and dispose of  
hazardous products.



**✓ REDUCE THE  
AMOUNT**

of hazardous products  
in your home.



**✓ TAKE PART**

in hazardous household  
waste collection  
programs in  
your area.



**Don't be sorry -- be safe!**

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