

Household Hazardous Waste

FACTS:

- Leftover household products that contain corrosive, toxic, ignitable, or reactive ingredients are considered to be "household hazardous waste" or "HHW." (*USEPA*)
- Improper disposal of household hazardous wastes can include pouring them down the drain, on the ground, into storm sewers, or in some cases putting them out with the trash. The dangers of such disposal methods might not be immediately obvious, but improper disposal of these wastes can pollute the environment and pose a threat to human health.
- The average home can accumulate as much as 100 pounds of HHW in the basement and garage and in storage closets.

Pollution Prevention Month

RESOURCES:

Washtenaw County Public Health

<http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org>

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) Household Hazardous Waste

http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,1607,7-135-3312_4118_4239---,00.html

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Landfill prohibited materials and appropriate disposal options

<http://www.deq.state.mi.us/documents/deq-ess-p2tas-BannedLandfillMaterials.pdf>

Michigan County Recycling, Composting and HHW Contacts

http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,1607,7-135-3585_4130-115394--,00.html

US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Municipal solid waste

<http://www.epa.gov/garbage/hhw.htm>

US Environmental Protection Agency

List of common HHW products

<http://www.epa.gov/msw/hhw-list.htm>



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:

Why is household hazardous waste a concern?

In many communities, waste haulers do not allow their customers to dispose of HHW in their trash. Even where disposal options exist, residents are often unaware of them. HHW collection programs provide both safe disposal options and information about what is hazardous, why, and how to avoid needing to dispose of these materials in the first place.

How can you prevent household hazardous waste?

- *Check the label before you buy.* If you see a cautionary notice, understand that this material will become household hazardous waste if not used up completely.
- *Use the product as the manufacturer instructs.* Companies have spent millions of dollars testing their product to comply with federal regulations. The instructions should be followed to get maximum benefit from the products you use without compromising your safety.
- *Buy only what you need.* Surprisingly, some products cost more to dispose of than they cost to purchase. Using forethought when purchasing these products may save your community the cost of disposing of them as HHW.
- *Store products for safety.* Children, pets, and others may accidentally injure themselves when products are not safely stored. Make sure potential HHW products are stored out of harm's way.

Tips for use, storage and disposal of HHWs in the home:

- Use and store products containing hazardous substances carefully to prevent any accidents at home. Never store hazardous products in food containers; keep them in their original containers and never remove labels. Corroding containers, however, require special handling. Call your local hazardous materials official or fire department for instructions.
- When leftovers remain, never mix HHW with other products. Incompatible products might react, ignite, or explode, and contaminated HHW might become unrecyclable.
- Remember to follow any instructions for use and disposal provided on product labels.
- Call your local health department for instructions on proper use and disposal and to learn about local HHW drop off programs and upcoming collection days.

SERVICES AVAILABLE:

For more info on HHW visit:

<http://environmentalhealth.ewashtenaw.org> or call the Home
Toxics Reduction Center Hotline at 734-222-3950.