



Fact Sheet: Hazardous Household Waste

What is Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) is excess product used by consumers in the home that are hazardous in nature, but are not regulated as hazardous waste under federal and state laws. The labels on hazardous products typically use words like CAUTION, FLAMMABLE, WARNING, or POISON.

Each person in Pennsylvania produces an average of four pounds of HHW each year, or about 25,000 tons statewide. If carelessly managed, these consumer waste products can create environmental and public health hazards.

Types of HHW

- ♻️ Cleaning Products: aerosols, bathroom cleaners, drain cleaners, chlorine bleach, solvents, spot removers, toilet cleaners, oven cleaners, rug and floor cleaners, furniture polish
- ♻️ Auto/Garage: car wax, starter fluid, solvent-based cleaners, antifreeze, repair products, brake fluid, motor oil, gasoline
- ♻️ Home Improvement and Household Supplies: oil based stains and paints*, caulking, varnish, paint thinners, chemical strippers, flea collars and sprays, insect repellents, insecticides, kerosene, lighter fluid, lye, mothballs, pool chemicals, fluorescent light tubes.
- ♻️ Lawn and Garden Care: weed and pest killers, herbicides, fungicides, and other lawn chemicals
- ♻️ Hobby Products: glues, paints, stains, finishes, contact cement, photographic chemicals
- ♻️ Personal Care Products: nail polish and remover, lotions and crèmes, hair color, mercury thermometers

Notes (special handling considerations for the following items):

- ❖ Latex paint is not hazardous waste: it can be disposed safely at home if done properly.
- ❖ Pharmaceuticals and Sharps: Over-the-counter and prescription drugs; needles, syringes, sharps: **cannot** be accepted at a HHW collection.

Call Westmoreland Cleanways and Recycling for proper disposal options

How to Handle Mystery Material

Some materials may no longer be in their original container, may or may not have a legible label, and/or be very old. The material may no longer be manufactured, may be illegal to possess or use, or be intended primarily for use by business and industry. These unusual materials warrant extra care in handling and disposal.

If you are unsure of what a material is, if the container is stable, leave it in the container it is in until it is to be transported to a HHW collection.

If the package is unstable (corroded metal can, torn bag), decide the best way to encapsulate the material (glass container or heavy mil plastic). Wear chemical-proof gloves, long pants and long sleeves, and breathing mask. Ventilate the area, being sure to be upwind of a breeze or draft; but DON'T use a fan around powders. Encapsulate the material and store it where it can be undisturbed until it can be transported to a HHW collection. Wash well, and remove and wash clothing after handling any HHW product.

Westmoreland Cleanways and Recycling

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Managing HHW

The best method of managing Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) is to prevent its generation in the first place. This involves selecting the least toxic item "to do the job" and buying only the minimum amounts necessary.

Buying in large quantities is not a bargain if half goes unused and must be discarded. If the material is still usable (e.g. undamaged, still within designated shelf life), check with friends and neighbors to see if they can use it. You can also check with your local solid waste or recycling office for suggestions.

HHW Disposal

Generally speaking, household hazardous waste is difficult and costly to dispose of. Some communities conduct periodic community collection events. In some areas, specially licensed haulers have an at-home collection service. Only a very few permanent drop-off sites exist statewide.

Over 1,000,000 lbs. of HHW has been collected at Westmoreland Cleanways and Recycling HHW collection events since 1996.



Call Westmoreland Cleanways and Recycling for the most up-to-date list of communities offering curbside HHW collection, communities offering one-day collection events, and Westmoreland Cleanways and Recycling's HHW event schedule.

Other Items

Some difficult-to-dispose items are not considered hazardous waste and cannot be accepted at a household hazardous waste collection, but still require special disposal.

Westmoreland Cleanways and Recycling operates a Recycling Center for Hard-to-Dispose material (electronics, tires, Freon appliances, and more). Visit www.westmorelandcleanways.org, or call 724-879-4020 for details.