

A GUIDE FOR
Household Hazardous
Waste Reduction
&
Disposal
IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY



San Diego Regional
Household Hazardous Waste
Partnership

PUT TOXIC WASTE IN ITS PLACE!

Introduction

If you think hazardous materials are only found in landfills or industrial areas, think again, because the odds are good you have a lot of them in your own home. Household cleaning products, paint, pesticides, automotive supplies, electronics, and even ordinary batteries can pose a threat. Not only to the environment, but also to you, your family, and your pets, not to mention your trash collectors.



This booklet provides information about how to recycle and properly dispose of household hazardous waste and offers less toxic alternatives for use around the home.

Dispose of household hazardous waste, free of charge or for a small fee at a nearby collection facility. For information about your community's household hazardous waste collection program, see the telephone directory on the last page of this booklet. You can also visit www.Earth911.org or call 1-877-EARTH-911.

What is household hazardous waste?

Household hazardous waste is any material (gas, liquid, or solid) discarded from the home that may, due to its chemical nature, pose a health threat to people, animals, and the environment if handled or disposed of improperly. A product is hazardous if it is labeled with signal words, including:

- Toxic** ● poisonous or causes long-term illness
- Flammable** ● burns easily
- Corrosive** ● eats through materials (e.g., acidic)
- Reactive** ● can explode when exposed to heat, water, air, or strong impact

*Did you know?
Many household thermometers
contain mercury, which is poisonous.*

Do you know what chemicals are in your home?

Below are a few examples of household hazardous waste items that may be found in your home. Walk around your home with your family and make a list of the chemicals you find. We've started a list for you.

Bathroom

Bathroom cleaners, disinfectants, hair sprays and dyes, hair removers, isopropyl alcohol, mercury thermometers, nail polish, and nail polish remover

Kitchen

Pest traps, bleach, bug sprays, drain cleaners, floor care products, and household cleaners



Living Areas

Carpet cleaners, floor cleaners, and furniture polish

Garage

Auto fluids, batteries, car cleaners, fluorescent lights, fuels, glue, adhesives, paint, paint remover and thinner, turpentine, used motor oil and oil filters, varnish and stains

Yard / Garden / Pool

Chlorine, fertilizers, pesticides, pool chemicals, and weed killer

What other chemicals can be found in your home?

Be a smart shopper

Purchase:

- Look for products that are less hazardous or nontoxic.
- Read labels prior to purchase. Know what you are buying and what special safety precautions need to be followed when using, storing, or disposing of the product.
- Buy only the amount you need for your project.
- Buy recycled products. Ask your retailers if products are available with recycled content, including re-refined motor oil and antifreeze.



Disposal:

- Do not allow hazardous products to be washed into the gutter or storm drain in front of your home or business. Storm water drains flow directly into creeks, lakes, rivers, and the ocean.
- Offer your leftover products to neighbors, community groups, family, and friends. Make sure to keep products in their original containers to avoid confusion.
- Bring waste containers to your local household hazardous waste facility.
- Products should not be transported in containers larger than 5 gallons. Do not transport more than 15 gallons, or 125 pounds, of household hazardous waste in your vehicle.

Did you know?

Over 2,000 new chemicals are registered in the U.S. annually. Less than 10% of those have been tested for their effects on human health.*

Recipes for healthy cleaning



Instead of harsh chemicals to clean your home, try using:

Bathroom:

Glass cleaner

Mix 1 quart warm water with ¼ cup white vinegar (or 2 tablespoons of lemon juice).

Store mixture in a spray bottle for future use.

Toilet disinfectant

Mix ½ cup of borax with 1 gallon of hot water. Let mixture sit for 30 minutes before scrubbing.

Mildew remover

Mix ½ cup of borax with 1 gallon of hot water. Using mixture, scrub with a nylon scouring pad. Use hot water to rinse.

Scrubbing with a vinegar and salt paste mixture will also work.

Tile cleaner

Use diluted liquid soap and scrub with a nylon pad or old toothbrush.

Mineral stain remover

To remove mineral deposits around faucets, cover stains with strips of paper towel or cloth that have been soaked in vinegar. Let sit for 1 hour and rinse.

Kitchen:

Scouring cleanser

Sprinkle baking soda on a sponge and scrub.

Drain cleanser

Pour ¼ cup of baking soda down the drain followed by 2 ounces of vinegar. Cover the drain and let sit for 15 minutes. Rinse with 2 quarts of boiling water.

Floor cleaner

Mix 1 cup of vinegar with 2 gallons of warm water.

Living room:

All purpose cleaner

1 quart warm water,
1 teaspoon liquid soap,
1 teaspoon borax,
¼ cup undiluted white vinegar.

Mix ingredients thoroughly and store in a spray bottle.

Use for cleaning countertops, floors, walls, carpets, and upholstery.

Upholstery cleaner

Mix ¼ cup liquid soap with 3 tablespoons of water. Rub foam into upholstery with a cotton cloth then wipe clean with a sponge.



Recipes for Least Toxic-Cleaning from Ecology Center of Berkeley, California.

** California SB 600: Bio-monitoring by Sen. Deborah Ortiz (D-Sacramento)*

Paint

Smart shopper

- Look for low VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) paints which are less harmful to air quality.
- Purchase water-based latex paint rather than oil-based paint.
- Avoid using spray paint, which contains flammable chemicals.
- Buy returned paint and save money.
- Purchase only the amount of paint needed.
- Buy recycled-content paint when possible.



Put leftover paint to use

- Return unopened cans to the paint store; some retailers will give a refund.
- Use leftover paint as a sealant or undercoat on another project.
- Share leftovers with neighbors or donate to a community group or organization in need of paint.

Proper disposal

- If containers have liquid in them, they must be taken to a household hazardous waste facility for disposal.
- Only empty paint cans or cans with completely dried paint may be placed in your trash bin.

Motor oil

Where can I take used motor oil and oil filters for recycling?



● State certified oil recycling centers

Bring used motor oil to an oil-recycling center such as an automotive service center or auto parts store. For locations, visit www.Earth911.org or call 1-877-EARTH-911.

● Curbside used oil collection

Some communities provide curbside used motor oil collection services. Check with your city to see if this service is available in your area.

● Household hazardous waste facility or event

Recycle used motor oil and oil filters at a household hazardous waste collection facility or event.

Yard and garden

- Select native, pest-resistant, or drought-tolerant plants that are suited to the soil and climate.
- Use compost in your potting soil as a natural pesticide.
- Learn how to identify the useful insects that eat other pests and aerate the soil.
- Attend home composting and healthy pest control workshops.
- Do not over-water your garden.
- Use white vinegar as a weed killer — it's effective and non-toxic for your children and pets.





Healthy home alternatives: Yard and garden reference chart

Chemical Product	Healthy Home Alternative
Ant pesticides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove all sources of food and water. Locate entry point and seal with caulk. Pour tartar, red chili powder, paprika, cinnamon, or dried peppermint at point of entry. Kill visible ants with soapy water or vacuum. Baits or traps are preferable over sprays.
Roach pesticides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove all sources of food and water. Remove hiding places such as old newspapers, garbage bags, and other clutter. Place bay leaves in cracks where pests may enter. Set out a dish of baking soda and powdered sugar. Carefully apply boric acid powder into cracks where roaches hide (Keep away from children and pets).
Flea collars & sprays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add small amounts of brewers yeast or vitamin B in pet's food. Use an herbal collar, ointment, or bath (eucalyptus or rosemary). Wash pet bedding and treat with flea soap or citrus oil product. Sprinkle carpet with borax and vacuum twice a week.
Pesticides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove pests by hand. Spray pests with a strong stream of water. Mist or spray with soapy water.
Snail/slug killers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove tall grass and debris from area. Overturn clay pots or lay board between rows of planted vegetables. Fill a shallow pan with stale beer and place in infested area.
Chemical fertilizers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buy or make your own compost. Use natural soil enhancers, such as greensand, bone meal, or fish meal.

*Did you know?
California state law prohibits the
disposal of batteries and fluorescent
light bulbs in your trash.*



Electronic waste

E-waste

Electronic waste includes cell phones, computers, and televisions. Many electronic devices contain toxic materials such as lead, mercury, cadmium, and other materials that can harm human and environmental health. As with other household hazardous waste, electronic waste should not be disposed in your regular garbage, and must be taken to a household hazardous waste facility. For your local facility, refer to the inside back cover page with phone numbers listed by city.

Lead contamination

Computer monitors, televisions, and even video cameras may have a cathode ray tube (CRT) or picture tube. CRTs are banned from landfills because each one contains an average of 4 to 8 pounds of lead and can contaminate soil and groundwater.

Electronic waste disposal

Safe, proper, and legal disposal of electronic waste is important.

- Reuse and recycle if possible by taking to a thrift store or computer recycler. Many electronic retailers periodically hold free collection events.
- Take electronics to a household hazardous waste disposal site as referred by your city's program on inside back cover page.
- For other disposal locations, visit www.Earth911.org or call 1-877-EARTH-911.



What happens to the household hazardous waste that is collected?

- Latex paint is recycled and reused.
- Oil-based paint is reused as supplemental fuel in the manufacturing of cement.
- Motor oil is recycled as re-refined motor oil, lubricants, marine diesel fuel, and tar by-products such as asphalt cover.
- Household hazardous waste that cannot be recycled or reused is packed into drums for disposal at hazardous waste landfills or incineration facilities.
- Electronic components are disassembled and are either recycled or processed according to state and federal specifications.
- Batteries are broken open to neutralize the acid and recycle the plastic. The lead and lithium are melted down to make new batteries.

Household Hazardous Waste Disposal:

Earth 911: Visit www.earth911.org or call 1-877-EARTH-911

Illegal Dumping:

Hazardous Materials Management: 619-338-2284

I Love A Clean San Diego Recycling Hotline:

800- 237-BLUE

Composting / Gardening:

Solana Center for Environmental Innovation Home Composting Program:
760-436-7986

South Bay Home Composting / Less Toxic Gardening Program:
619-691-5122

Master Gardener Hotline:
858-694-2860

Storm Water Violation Complaints:

888-846-0800

California Integrated Waste Management Board:

Visit www.ciwmb.ca.gov or call 916-341-6000

Household Hazardous Waste Telephone Directory:

Carlsbad: 760-602-2794
Chula Vista: 619-691-5122
Coronado: 619-522-7380
Del Mar: 800-444-4244
El Cajon: 619-596-5100
Encinitas: 800-444-4244
Escondido: 760-839-4818
Imperial Beach: 619-423-8311
La Mesa: 619-287-5696, ext. 4270
Lemon Grove: 800-449-7587

National City: 800-237-2583
Oceanside: 760-435-5015
Poway: 858-679-5410
San Diego: 858-694-7000
San Marcos: 760-744-1050
Santee: 619-258-4100 ext. 128
Solana Beach: 858-720-2400 ext. 2515
Unincorporated County: 877-713-2784
Vista: 800-444-4244

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Visit www.Earth911.org
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This program benefits Storm Water Management Projects in San Diego County.

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