

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

Household Hazardous Waste means substances that significantly harm the health of humans and pollute the environment, if they are not handled and disposed of correctly. They make up about 1% of the total waste sent to landfill by Australians each year. Household Hazardous Wastes are those that are found in homes across the community rather than industry.

Some common hazardous materials you may find around your home are:

- In the bathroom – medicines, bathroom cleaners, nail polish, nail polish remover, sharps
- In the laundry – disinfectants, detergents, cleaners, bleaches, aerosols
- In the toolshed – paints, stains, paint-thinners, rust-remover, varnish, resins, turpentine, kerosene
- In the garage – auto batteries, anti-freeze, brake fluid, car polish, grease, degreaser, oil
- In the garden – swimming pool chemicals, rat poison, fertilisers, pesticides, weed killers, phosphates
- Around the house – fluorescent light tubes, gas cylinders, smoke detectors

WHAT CAN I DO?

- When buying hazardous materials, buy only the amount you need. That way you will reduce chemical waste.
- Use less hazardous alternatives to clean your house – try vinegar and bicarbonate of soda instead of harsh bleaches.
- Don't pour chemicals down the sink or stormwater drain, as this pollutes waterways and harms wildlife.
- Reuse leftover chemicals or ask a friend or neighbour if they can use them.
- Pour old cooking oil into a glass jar. Put the lid on and place into your garbage bin. Small amounts are O.K. in your compost heap.
- Leave the lid off paint tins, allowing small amounts of paint to dry out. You can then put the tin into your garbage bin, or call your local council to see if they accept tins for recycling.
- Call your local council to find out when the next Household Hazardous Waste collection is. If there is a permanent store in your area take your chemical waste for proper disposal. Take out-of-date and unused medicines to your local pharmacy/chemist to be disposed of through the *Return Unwanted Medicines* (RUM) program.

MORE INFORMATION

- www.returnmed.com.au – information about returning unwanted medicines
- www.environment.nsw.gov.au/education/spd_chem_cleanout.htm - Information on how and where to safely dispose of your household chemical clutter.
- www.environment.nsw.gov.au/envirom/wastepest.htm - Handling pesticide waste - a household guide.
- Call the EPA Pollution line on 131 555
- Call your local council for information on household chemical collections in your area