

What is Household Hazardous Waste?

Unwanted chemicals in the home are household hazardous waste (HHW). Look for warning labels (danger, poison, flammable, toxic, corrosive, or oxidizer) on the container. It is unsafe and illegal to put these wastes in the garbage, down the sink, or into storm drains.

Hazardous products can be found in many areas of your home, like in the garage, shed, and under the kitchen or bathroom sink. Give away what you cannot use, or bring it to a free County HHW drop-off event. Recycling locations and event schedules can be found at smchealth.org/hhw.

Reduce household hazardous waste in the first place. Buy only what you need, and look for less toxic alternatives at smchealth.org/healthyhome.

Got Toxics at Home? We'll Help You Manage Them Safely



Household Cleaning Chemicals
Bleach, stain removers, all-purpose cleaners, etc.



Fluorescent Lights¹
All sizes and types (10 tube/bulb limit per drop-off).



Paints², Painting Supplies and Home Improvement
Paint, stains, thinners, varnish, epoxy, roof tar, etc.



Garden Fertilizers, Herbicides and Pesticides
Powders, baits, or any other product for killing pests (ants, cockroaches, fleas, ticks, etc.) in and around your home.



Propane Tanks and Outdoor Cooking Fluids
Lighter fluid, camp stove fuel, propane tanks for gas grills.



Household Batteries³
AAA to 9-volt, buttons from hearing aids and watches, and any other types. (Tape the terminals before drop-off.)



Automotive Supplies, Car Batteries and Motor Oil³
Antifreeze, brake fluid, gasoline, diesel, fuel additives, fluids, chrome polish, many cleaners, roadside flares and waxes.



Aerosol Cans
Spray paints, hair spray, or any other aerosol sprays (except food grade products like cooking oil sprays).



Hobbies
Arts and crafts, glues, epoxies, dyes, etc.



Pools or Spas
Home water treatment chemicals.

- 1 Some hardware stores, transfer stations and recycle yards may take back fluorescent bulbs and/or tubes for free from the public. Visit smchealth.org/post/hhw-most-wanted
- 2 These items may be taken to a PaintCare drop-off location. Visit paintcare.org for locations.
- 3 Curbside pick-up service for household batteries and used motor oil and filters may be provided by your local waste management company. Visit smchealth.org/post/curbside-pick-options

For a full list of locations near you, check recyclestuff.us

HHW Facility Drop-off Program

You must live in San Mateo County to use the free facility drop-off Program. Not all hazardous products require a facility appointment. Check smchealth.org/hhw-most-wanted and recyclestuff.us for local collection centers.

1. Estimate How Much Waste You Have

- Base your estimates on the actual product in the container, not the number or size of the containers.

2. Check Your Container Sizes and Volume Limit

- Each container may be up to 5 gallons in size.
- The volume limit is 10 gallons (50 pounds) per appointment. Fluorescent lights are limited to a total of 10 tubes/bulbs.

3. Make a Free Appointment

- Online at smchealth.org/hhw-appt, or call **(650) 372-6200**.
- Make one appointment for each 10 gallon limit (e.g. 20 gallons requires 2 appointments, requiring 2 vehicle trips).
- No limit on number of appointments.

4. Package and Transport the Waste

- State regulation prohibits transporting more than 10 liquid gallons or 50 solid pounds of hazardous waste in your vehicle.

5. When You Arrive at the Drop-off

- Stay in your vehicle.
- Turn off your engine.
- Extinguish any smoking materials.

Stay updated on future household hazardous waste events. Sign up for email alerts at smchealth.org/hhw.