

## Household Hazardous Waste Awareness

### Learn how to reduce the amount of household hazardous waste in your home

Waukesha, WI - When improperly used, stored or disposed, household hazardous wastes such as oil based paints, weed killers, insecticides, solvents and wood preservatives can create a potential risk to people and the environment. Do you know what products in your home are potentially hazardous and why? Are they properly stored away from children and pets, and kept from freezing or extreme heat?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that Americans generate 1.6 million tons of household hazardous waste each year. Follow these four steps to reduce the amount of household hazardous waste in your home:

**1 - Look at the warning words on the label.** You and your family can minimize risk of exposure to toxic chemicals by reading labels on products that you purchase and following directions carefully when applying, storing and disposing of products. When purchasing a product, look for the least dangerous and avoid products that say “Danger” or “Poison”. Use water based paints and sealers whenever possible. To find out about contents of household products that may contain hazardous chemicals, visit the National Institutes of Health website at [www.householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov](http://www.householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov) A list of alternatives to household hazardous products can be found at [www.waukeshacounty.gov/recycling](http://www.waukeshacounty.gov/recycling), click on Hazardous Waste, then Households.

**2 - Buy only what you need.** When purchasing a product, buy only the amount that you will need. Leftover materials can be shared with neighbors or donated to a business charity. For example, theater groups may be interested in donations of leftover paint.

**3 - Properly store all household hazardous products.** The US EPA estimates that the average home can accumulate as much as 100 pounds of household hazardous waste in the basement, garage or storage cabinets. It’s important to keep these products away from children and pets. Remember to keep paints, driveway sealers and other products from freezing.

**4 - Properly dispose of all household hazardous wastes.** Locations and hours for the three year-round household hazardous waste collection sites in Waukesha County can be found at [www.waukeshacounty.gov/recycling](http://www.waukeshacounty.gov/recycling) or call 262-896-8300.

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