

Parting Ways ~ Proper Latex Paint Disposal

It's happened. Despite your best efforts to purchase wisely, touch-up every surface, and share with your friends, you are left with latex paint that you cannot use. Latex paint cannot be accepted at Household Hazardous Waste events, but you can safely and easily dispose of it yourself. Liquid latex paint cannot be thrown away. Instead, dry it out using the following techniques. Once dried, latex paint and cans may be taken to your local transfer station for disposal.

- ✍ If the paint can is less than 1/4 full, harden the remaining paint using an absorbent material such as kitty litter, newspaper, or sawdust.
- ✍ If very little paint remains, remove the lid and allow the paint to air dry.
- ✍ For larger quantities of paint, line a cardboard box with plastic and fill with a thin layer of paint (about 1 inch deep). Add shredded newspaper and allow paint to harden. Repeat this process one layer at a time until all of the paint has hardened.

Be sure to keep drying paint away from animals and children and don't forget to recycle the empty paint can.

HHW Collection Schedule

The Nashua Regional Planning Commission will hold 6 Household Hazardous Waste Collections in 2011. Collections are open to residents of Amherst, Brookline, Hollis, Hudson, Litchfield, Merrimack, Milford, Mont Vernon, Nashua, Pelham, and Windham.

- ✍ Saturday **April 23**, 8am-noon, 6 Riverside St, Nashua
- ✍ Saturday **May 7**, 8am-noon, 289 South St, Milford
- ✍ Thursday **June 2**, 3:30-7:30pm, 6 Riverside St, Nashua
- ✍ Saturday **August 6**, 8am-noon, 6 Riverside St, Nashua
- ✍ Saturday **October 1**, 8am-noon, 6 Riverside St, Nashua
- ✍ Saturday **November 5**, 8am-noon, 6 Riverside St, Nashua

A \$10 fee/vehicle will be charged to all participants to cover disposal costs. For more information please visit www.nashuarpc.org/hhw.

Nashua Regional Planning Commission
Household Hazardous Waste Program

Paint Primer

A guide to proper paint handling and disposal

You've just finished painting the kitchen and step back to admire your handiwork. The walls are done, but now you have to figure out what to do with the remaining paint. The Nashua Regional Planning Commission's "Paint Primer" contains all of the information you will need to properly handle and dispose of your household paint.



Let's Talk Paint ~ Facts & Figures

- ✍ An average of 560 million gallons of household paint are sold in the US each year. In other words, each person in the US purchases an average of 2 gallons of household paint per year.
- ✍ Oil-based paints account for roughly 15% of paint sales in the US.
- ✍ Paint accounted for 55% of the materials collected during the Nashua Regional Planning Commission's 2010 Household Hazardous Waste season. This translates into 42,810 pounds of unused paint.
- ✍ Since 2003, NRPC has collected 351,881 pounds of paint waste at its Household Hazardous Waste collections.
- ✍ Improper disposal of paint waste can pollute the environment and cause groundwater contamination, which harms animals, plants, and people.



Know Your Paint ~ Water-based vs. Solvent

Water-Based Paint

- 🖌️ **Alias**—latex
- 🖌️ **Ingredients**—water, pigment, emulsion resin (latex)
- 🖌️ **Clean-up**—soap and water
- 🖌️ **Water test**—if a drop of latex paint is placed in a cup of water it will dissolve
- 🖌️ **Environmental Impact**—latex paint is non-toxic and is not considered household hazardous waste when dried. However, latex paint is not entirely benign. Although it contains less hazardous ingredients than oil-based paints, latex paint still contains acrylics, vinyl, and epoxies. These can cause significant environmental harm if latex paint is poured down the drain or put in the trash in liquid form.

Solvent-Based Paint

- 🖌️ **Alias**—oil-based, alkyd
- 🖌️ **Ingredients**—oils, solvents, volatile organic compounds
- 🖌️ **Clean-up**—paint thinner, turpentine, mineral spirits, solvent
- 🖌️ **Water test**—if a drop of solvent-based paint is placed in a cup of water it will separate from the water and float to the surface
- 🖌️ **Environmental Impact**—solvent-based paint is toxic and flammable and is considered household hazardous waste. If improperly disposed of, it can contaminate drinking water supplies and groundwater. Solvent-based paint is also toxic to plants and animals. Do not dry oil-based paints, as this can release toxic fumes that are hazardous to the environment and your health. Oil-based paints should always be disposed of at Household Hazardous Waste collection events.

Play it Safe

If you cannot read the label, assume the paint is oil-based for disposal purposes.



Think Before You Dump

By planning your project carefully and thinking creatively, you'll find there's no need to dump that leftover paint.

- 🖌️ **Buy only what you need**—by making smart purchasing decisions you will not only reduce waste but also save money.



- 🖌️ **Practice proper paint storage**—if you store paint properly it can last for years. Begin by covering the paint can opening with plastic wrap and then secure the lid. Storing the can upside down will cause the paint to create a tight seal around the lid, also increasing its longevity. In the winter months, be sure to keep paint from freezing.

- 🖌️ **Use it up**—small amounts of paint can go a long way towards touch-up projects.

- 🖌️ **Get creative**—mix and match smaller amounts of leftover paint to create new colors and cover larger areas.



- 🖌️ **Share the wealth**—donate leftover paint to community groups, theater projects, schools, churches, or anyone else who might be able to put it to good use. Love the color of your friend's kitchen? Conduct a paint exchange with your family, friends, and neighbors to expand your color palette.

- 🖌️ **Recycle that can**—once you've used up the last bit of paint, don't forget to recycle the empty can. Just be sure that the skin of paint on the walls of the can is completely dry.

