



HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE



Our environment is precious. It is essential for our health and life. And how we take care of the environment now not only affects us, but also the future generations.

While it's true that large industry causes much of America's pollution, individual citizens and their homes also contribute heavily to the pollution problem.

It is an even bigger threat if this material is allowed to accumulate in our homes, because improper storage and disposal of household waste can damage our health.

Some household products contain chemicals that have been proven to cause burns, liver and kidney damage, harm to the central nervous system, cancer, birth defects and respiratory problems.

The Environmental Protection Agency defines a hazardous substance as one that may harm human health and/or the environment. Generally, materials that are **flammable, corrosive, toxic, or react** to explode when mixed with other substances are considered hazardous.

Today an estimated 27,000 hazardous materials are stocked on retail store shelves. Hazardous materials can be found in products that are attractively packaged, convenient to use and are advertised as safe.

When used and disposed as directed by the manufacturer, most of these products are safe. However, many consumers are unaware of proper and safe disposal methods. **Improper** handling can cause chemicals **to enter the environment and waterways, killing wildlife and polluting soils and drinking water.**

Safe disposal guidelines for each product differ. Some safe ways to dispose hazardous waste include pouring the product down the drain, taking products to recycling centers or taking products to community collection sites.

As the traditional fall cleaning days arrive, hesitate before tossing every unwanted product in the trash. Some of those products may be the very ones that are destroying our environment. Household hazardous products have been divided into five categories:

- Paint and related products
- Automotive products (i.e., Oil, car batteries)
- Pesticides
- Household cleaners
- Other – a category that includes rechargeable batteries, pool cleaners, Photographic chemicals and etc.

Many of these products may be currently stored in your garage, basement and kitchen. Look around – notice that products like glue or furniture polish, thought to be relatively harmless, should be disposed of properly or used up.