

Household Hazardous Waste Disposal

Household Hazardous Waste exists in almost every home. Common products, like those used for cleaning, home improvement projects, vehicle maintenance, lawn and garden maintenance, etc. contain hazardous chemicals which can be dangerous to our health and the environment. In order to protect ourselves and our surroundings, we must know how to use, store and dispose of these products properly.

Products such as paint, paint thinner, pesticides, fertilizers, gasoline, anti-freeze, motor oil, brake fluid, furniture polish, oven cleaner, drain cleaner and adhesives, to name just a few, have common characteristics. These products are all hazardous because they contain chemicals which are:

- Flammable
- Toxic
- Corrosive
- Explosive / Reactive

Although these products are usually safe when they are used according to the labeled directions, they can become dangerous if people are unaware of them, or if they forget that they are handling hazardous products.

At the point in time when hazardous household products are no longer wanted or usable, they then become household hazardous wastes. As a percentage of total household waste, only a small portion would constitute household hazardous waste, but that small portion can cause a lot of harm to people, pets and the environment if improperly disposed of. There have been instances when household hazardous wastes have injured sanitation haulers from fumes, splashing chemicals, fires in the trucks and even explosions.

When these products are improperly placed in landfills, they can potentially leach into surface water and ground water, which is the source of our drinking water. Household hazardous waste should **never** be disposed of down storm sewer drains or placed in drainage ditches, because they are direct pathways to nearby surface water. Any household hazardous waste that is dumped or poured on the ground is only a rain storm away from entering surface water or groundwater, and can be residually stored in the ground for a very long time, during which time they slowly release into our water sources. Household hazardous waste should also not be dumped into the sanitary sewer system. Bacteria in sewage treatment plants can be killed by household hazardous waste, which could ultimately result in the release of raw sewage and chemicals into waterways.

Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Options vary, but the best disposal option for most products is to simply not dispose of them at all. If possible, use products that aren't hazardous, but which still accomplish the same purpose as a product which contains hazardous chemicals. If that is not possible, don't purchase more of the hazardous product than is required to accomplish the task.

The other option, which is periodically available, is to take advantage of regional household hazardous waste collection events. These events are sponsored by the Mid-Missouri Solid Waste District, and are advertised in advance on the City website, as well as in local newspapers.



Citizen Information Brochures
May be obtained from the
Maintenance Department
245 S. Summit Dr. Holts Summit, MO. 65043
Office Hours: 8am - 5pm, Mon. - Fri.
(573) 896 - 5600
<http://www.holtssummit.org/>

