



FACT SHEET

GUIDE 20

PROPER PAINT DISPOSAL OPTIONS



Disposal options are different for latex paint and oil-based products

There are two (2) types of paints common for household use: water-based latex paints and oil-based paints, stains and finishes. All oil-based products are considered a hazardous waste and must be disposed of at a household hazardous waste (HHW) collection. Latex paints are

not considered hazardous and can be placed in the regular trash for disposal in a landfill once they are prepared properly.

How Can You Tell If Paint is Latex or Oil Based?

Look for the word “latex” on the label. If you can’t read the label or the label is missing, think about how you cleaned up after using the paint. If you simply used water to rinse your brushes and soap to wash up, then the paint is water-based and safe for disposal at the curb. If you used paint thinner, mineral spirits or another substance to clean your brushes it is probably an oil-based product and must be disposed of at a HHW event. Still aren’t sure? Bring to a HHW event.

When are HHW events?

The Township offers one (1) annual event in the springtime and Wayne County offers several events throughout the year. Check our web site for dates, times and locations of these events. Our web site is: www.plymouthtp.org.

Prepare Latex Paint for Curbside Collection

While latex paint is not considered a hazardous waste, it does contain chemicals and care should be taken to prevent those chemicals, not to mention the coloring, from spilling onto our roadways once the cans are crushed inside of the trash truck. How to prepare the can for disposal depends on how much paint is left in the can.

- If there is a thin layer of paint film on the can, simply throw out can. If it is a metal can and you can wash the paint clean off, you can recycle it.
- If there is about an inch or less of paint in the bottom, remove the lid and place the can in a well ventilated area away from children and pets. The paint should be dry within a few weeks and the can(s) can be placed at the curb with the lids off on your regular garbage day.
- If there are more than several inches left in the can we recommend adding kitty litter or other paint drying compounds available at local hardware stores to the liquid. Place the cans in a sunny, well ventilated area away from children and pets. It should be dry in a few days depending on the amount of paint. Place the cans out to the curb with the lids off on your regular trash collection day.
- If you have a lot of cans to dry out, try this method. Pour paint from the cans into a five (5) gallon paint bucket or into a 3’ x 3’ cardboard box lined with a plastic bag. Add kitty litter or

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another absorbing agent and place the buckets or boxes in a sunny area away from children and pets, stirring frequently until the paint becomes a solid. Place the cans or boxes out to the curb on your regular trash collection day.

- **Do not pour latex paint into drains connected to septic tanks, municipal sewage systems or storm drains.**

Donation Option

Properly stored paints may be needed by local charities and civic organizations. Habitat for Humanity is one local group that may be interested. Call 734-459-7744 for more information.

Remember, when putting cans out to the curb for garbage collection, place the cans with the lids off next to your regular trash so the hauler can see that the paint is hardened.