



*Clean Water begins at home!*

## Household Hazardous Materials

**Y**ou'd be amazed how many hazardous materials most of us have at home. Oil-based paints and stains, paint thinner, gasoline, charcoal starter fluid, cleaners, waxes, pesticides, fingernail polish remover, and wood preservatives are just a few.

When these items spill on the ground or into a storm drain, they can go directly into streams, lakes, or wetlands harming fish and wildlife. They also infiltrate into the ground and contaminate drinking water supplies. Similarly, contamination occurs from pouring hazardous products into a sink, toilet, or septic system, or piping them to a municipal sewer system. Many compounds will pass through the wastewater treatment plant and may contaminate receiving waters or harm the biological process used at the treatment plant, which reduces overall treatment efficiency.

Here are some ways to help keep these materials out of our soils, sediments, and waters:

- Use less toxic products whenever possible. Contact Clark County Solid Waste at (360) 367-2121 or call the Washington Toxics Coalition at (206) 632-1545 for information about alternatives.
- Dispose of hazardous materials and their containers properly. Never dump products labeled with *poisonous, caustic, flammable, inflammable, volatile, explosive, danger, warning, caution, or dangerous*



outdoors, into a storm drain, or in sinks, toilets, or other drains. Call Clark County Solid Waste at (360) 397-2121 ext. 4352 for information on disposal sites, methods, collection events, and alternative products. Visit [www.RecyclingA-Z.com](http://www.RecyclingA-Z.com) for more disposal information.

- Check contents frequently for sign of leaks. If a container is rusty and looks as if it may leak, place it in a secondary container (like a plastic bucket with kitty litter) to avoid a cleanup problem.
- Store hazardous materials containers under cover and off the ground. Keep them out of the weather to avoid rusting, freezing, cracking, etc.
- Hazardous materials should be stored out of children's reach in clearly labeled, unbreakable containers. Don't store in food or beverage containers.
- Keep spill cleanup materials on hand. Kitty litter or sawdust are good for many oil-based spills.
- Ground cloths and drip pans should be used under any work outdoors which involves such hazardous materials as oil-based paints, stains, rust removers, masonry cleaners, and others bearing label warnings.
- Latex paint (not accepted in liquid form at the landfill) may be taken to a household hazardous waste site for recycling; or you can leave the can uncovered in a protected place until dry, then put in the garbage.
- Move an activity involving hazardous materials indoors (with proper ventilation) out of the weather, whenever possible.
- Follow manufacturers' directions when using all materials. Over-applying yard chemicals, for instance, can wash compounds into nearby water bodies. Never apply pesticides when rain is expected.
- When hazardous materials are in use, place the container inside a tub or bucket to minimize spills.
- Buy only as much as you need for the project and safely dispose of leftovers (in original containers with labels to identify the material). Use the free hazardous waste facilities or collection events for disposal.



For more information, please call the Clark County Clean Water Program at (360) 397-2121 ext. 4345 or visit [www.clark.wa.gov/water-resources](http://www.clark.wa.gov/water-resources).



For other formats, contact the Clark County ADA Office: **Voice** (360) 397-2322; **Relay** 711 or (800) 833-6388; **Fax** (360) 397-6165; **E-mail** ADA@clark.wa.gov.