

The household hazardous wastes in and around your home can affect your family and pets and can be toxic to fish and wildlife. An average Georgia household generates an estimated 20 pounds of household hazardous wastes each year. That's a total of 62 million pounds—enough to fill 1,550 tractor trailers every year!

Preventing the generation of leftovers is the best way to solve the problem. Share the tips in this brochure with your friends to help them prevent household hazardous products from becoming wastes and potential pollutants in our streams.

**Hazardous products include such items as:**

- Paints, stains and sealers
- Used motor oil and antifreeze
- Paint strippers and paint thinners
- Cleaning agents and solvents
- Drain and oven cleaners
- Fertilizers and pesticides
- Gasoline, kerosene and propane
- Batteries
- Mercury thermometers, thermostats and fluorescent lamps
- Pool chemicals

*This brochure is one of a series dedicated to raising awareness of pollution prevention. This brochure was created through a partnership between the Clean Water Campaign and the Pollution Prevention Assistance Division (P<sup>2</sup>AD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.*

*The disposal recommendations in this brochure do not apply to wastes generated by businesses.*



## Household Solutions for Preventing Water Pollution from Hazardous Wastes



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**“Be A Solution to Water Pollution”**

Follow and share these tips for reducing, recycling and disposing of different types of hazardous materials in your home.

Remember that fertilizers, pesticides, oil and other pollutants from your yard and driveway can be washed into a storm drain and carried to a nearby stream or lake.

## AUTOMOBILE



- Never dump vehicle fluids on pavement, the ground or down the storm drain. Collect and recycle motor oil, oil filters and other automobile fluids at vehicle service centers or parts stores listed on 1-800-CLEANUP and [www.cleanup.org](http://www.cleanup.org).
- Wash your vehicle at a professional car wash facility. This way the wastewater will be treated instead of possibly becoming a pollutant in a nearby stream. If you decide to wash your car at home, use a low or non-phosphate soap and wash your vehicle in a grassy area instead of on pavement.
- Regularly tune your car and fix leaks.

## BATTERIES & MERCURY CONTAINING PRODUCTS



- Use rechargeable batteries instead of alkaline disposables. Recycle rechargeable batteries at the sites listed on 1-800-8BATTERY.
- Buy digital thermometers instead of mercury thermometers.
- Replace a mercury thermostat with a programmable, digital thermostat.

## LIMITING HAZARDS FROM YOUR HOUSEHOLD



- Purchase non-hazardous or the least hazardous products for the job. As a general rule, a product with “CAUTION” on the label will be less hazardous than a product labeled “WARNING.” The most potentially hazardous product is labeled “DANGER” or “POISON.”
- Don’t be tempted by a “buy one get one free” deal. It will probably result in having to manage twice as much hazardous waste.

## LAWN CARE



- Use electric-powered lawn equipment instead of gas-powered whenever possible.
- Since it’s easy to create leftovers by overestimating the gasoline necessary for a mowing season, plan to make a second purchase of a lesser amount to finish the season.
- Help fertilize your lawn by mowing 1/3 of the total grass height only and leaving the clippings on the lawn (mulching mowers and mowers with sharp blades work best).
- Use pesticides and herbicides sparingly and only when all else fails.
  - Plant native plants since they can survive without extra fertilizers, pesticides and water.
  - Pull weeds by hand or with a weeding tool.
  - If pesticides are necessary, spot treat weeds instead of applying to the whole area.
  - Pesticides/fungicides/herbicides: Use as directed, find someone who will (e.g. local gardening club) or take it to a collection site (if available). As a last resort, stir into concrete mix until solid and dispose of in the trash.

## PAINT



- Use latex paint instead of oil-based paint. This also eliminates the need for paint thinner.
- When painting a large area, buy a little less than you think you will need. Once the job is well underway, you will have a better idea of how much more is required. This way you can plan to have enough for touch ups, but avoid gallons of leftover paint.

**Did you know Georgia households waste approximately four million gallons of paint each year?**

- Instead of buying methyl ethyl ketone (MEK) or xylene for stripping paint, do as much as possible with sandpaper and buy citrus oil stripper if needed.
- Paint/stain/varnish/sealer: Use it, find someone who will or take it to a collection site (if available). As a last resort, make it into a solid by mixing it with equal parts cat box litter and dispose of in the trash.
- When preparing your house for painting, collect paint chips and dispose of them in the trash. If left on the ground, they may wash into a storm drain and be carried to a nearby stream.

## THERE ARE TWO PRIMARY WAYS TO REDUCE HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTES:

- 1. Think Prevention First!**
- 2. Then, Recycle and Dispose of Wastes Properly!**

For more information on **HAZARDOUS WASTES**, a list of recycling sites and local contacts call 1-800-CLEANUP or go to [www.cleanup.org](http://www.cleanup.org). The site is linked from [www.p2ad.org](http://www.p2ad.org) and [www.cleanwatercampaign.com](http://www.cleanwatercampaign.com).