

# Household Hazardous Waste



## What makes a product hazardous?

Leftover household products that contain corrosive, toxic, ignitable, or reactive ingredients are considered to be household hazardous waste. Products, such as paints, cleaners, oils, batteries, and pesticides that contain potentially hazardous ingredients require special care when you dispose of them.

Improper disposal includes pouring them down the drain, on the ground, into storm sewers, or in some cases putting them out with the trash. The dangers of such disposal methods might not be immediately obvious, **but improper disposal of these wastes can pollute the environment and pose a threat to human health.**

Companies are required to test their products to comply with federal regulations. *Read product labels for disposal directions to reduce the risk of products exploding, igniting, leaking, mixing with other chemicals, or posing other hazards on the way to a disposal facility.* Even empty containers can pose hazards because of the residual chemicals that might remain!

**Flammable/combustible** – Can easily be set on fire: ignites easily.

**Explosive/reactive** – Can explode through exposure to heat, sudden shock, pressure or incompatible substance.

**Corrosive** – Chemical action can burn and destroy living tissues or other materials when brought in contact.

**Toxic** – Poisonous or lethal when ingested, touched, inhaled, or absorbed through skin, even in small quantities.

## Reduce the amount of household hazardous waste!

Only buy what you will need! Surprisingly, some products cost more to dispose of than they do to purchase. Using forethought when purchasing these products may save your community the cost of disposing of them as hazardous waste. Check the label, if you see a cautionary notice, *understand that this material will become a household hazardous waste if not used up properly and **always use the product as the manufacturer instructs.***

St. Clair County  
Environmental Services Department  
Household Hazardous Waste Facility  
6779 Smiths Creek Road, Kimball Twp.  
(810) 985-2443  
M-F 9:00 am – 2:00 pm  
(By appointment only)  
[www.stclaircounty.org/Offices/landfill/](http://www.stclaircounty.org/Offices/landfill/)

## Storage and Disposal

**Make sure that products are stored safely!** Children, pets, and others may accidentally injure themselves when products are not safely stored. Please remember to call the St. Clair County (Landfill)

Environmental Services Department (810) 985-2443 to schedule an appointment for disposal.

### Items that will be accepted include:

- § Antifreeze, Herbicides, Pesticides
- § Household cleaners
- § Transmission Fluid, brake fluid, gasoline, and fuel oil
- § Oil base paints and paint products (thinners, varnishes, and solvents)

### Items that will not be accepted include:

- § Latex Paint
- § Alkaline and Ni-Cad batteries
- § Automotive batteries
- § Used motor oil
- § Explosives
- § Any container over 5 gallons or over 25 pounds

## Before bringing your waste products to facility be sure to:



- ü Check containers – make sure lids are tight
- ü Make sure products are labeled
- ü Pack wastes in sturdy containers for transportation, such as a tub or a box
- ü Wrap leaking or dirty individual containers in a clean plastic bag and pack each item in a container with absorbent material, such as “kitty litter” to soak up leaks
- ü Transport the materials in you automobile trunk, rear of your vehicle or truck bed

## Safer alternatives to minimize use of common hazardous household products:

**Air refresher** – Find source of odor and deal with it; and open windows to ventilate. To scent air, use herbal bouquets pure vanilla on a cotton ball, or simmer cinnamon and cloves.

**Ants (in house)** – Locate entry point and seal with caulk. Remove all sources of food and water. Kill visible ants. Wash countertops, cabinets and floor with equal parts of vinegar and water to deter ant infestation. ALSO, there is a herb called “tansy” that is repulsive to ants. Lay cut brunches by windows or wherever they come in; and they won’t.

**Brass polish** – Use paste made from equal parts vinegar, salt and flour. Be sure to rinse completely afterward to prevent corrosion.

**Car battery corrosion** – Pour baking soda and water or cola over battery posts and scrub with a wire brush.

**Chrome polish** – Vinegar

**Cleaners (general)** – Liquid castile soap. Use as directed or dissolve 4 Tsp. baking soda in 1 qt. warm water.

**Coffee cup stain removal** – Rub with moist salt or baking soda.

**Copper cleaner** – Use paste made from equal parts vinegar, salt and flour. Be sure to rinse completely afterward to prevent corrosion.

**Decal removal** – Soak in hot water if practical; otherwise, use vinegar or coat it with peanut butter and let it soak overnight.

**Dishwashing** – Washing dishes by hand with liquid soap or mild detergent is preferable to using strong electric dishwashing detergents.

**Drain cleaner** – Try plunger first. Then pour ½ cup baking soda down, followed by ½ cup vinegar; wait a few minutes and pour in 2 qts. boiling water. Repeat if needed. If this fails, rent or buy a “drain snake”.

**Fertilizer** – Compost and organic fertilizers.

**Fleas on pets** – Vacuum twice a week with agitator vacuum; dispose of vacuum bags in trash. Wash pet bedding. Use flea comb on pets, drowning fleas in hot soapy water. Restrict pet access to human living areas until infestation is over.

**Floor cleaner** – 1 cup vinegar plus 2 gallons of water. For unfinished wood floors, add 1 cup linseed oil. To remove was buildup, scrub in club soda, let soak and wipe clean.

**Hand cleaner for paint/grease** – Rub hands with baby oil, vegetable oil or margarine, then wash with soap and water.

**Laundry bleach** – Use borax on all clothes or ½ cup white vinegar in rinse water to brighten dark clothing. Non-chlorinated bleach also works well.

**Linoleum floor polish** – Skim milk (it doesn't smell, really!!).

**Mildew remover** – A non-chlorinated scouring powder cleans mildew stains from grout. Scrub hard.

**Moths in clothes** – Thoroughly clean any used clothing or furniture before introducing into home. Wash woolens before storing; store in tight container. Vacuum rugs, behind and under furniture. Shake out woolens periodically.

**Oven cleaner** – As a preventative measure, cover the oven bottom with a sheet of aluminum foil. Clean up spills promptly. To clean, use baking soda, soap and water with a copper scrubber and lots of elbow grease. Or use a non-chlorinated scouring powder or non-caustic oven cleaner.

**Paint (oil based)** – Latex paint; avoid aerosols.

**Porcelain stain removal** – Baking soda.

**Refrigerator deodorizer** – Open box of baking soda.

**Roaches** – Remove all sources of food and water. Remove hiding places such as old newspapers, garbage bags and other clutter. Caulk or plug cracks and crevices. Last resort is to use boric acid (a poison). This must be kept away from pets and children.

**Rug/carpet cleaner** – Sprinkle baking soda, then vacuum.

**Silver cleaner** – Rub gently with baking soda and damp sponge (large objects). For small objects place in hot pot of water on stove with small piece of aluminum foil; add 1 teaspoon baking soda and 1 teaspoon salt; boil 2-3 minutes.

**Slugs and snails** – Remove tall grass and debris from vicinity of garden. Use beer traps (replenish frequently) or hand capture in the evening. Sheet copper is most effective barrier.

**Stain removal** – Depends on type of spill. Treat as quickly as possible and blot as much liquid as you can with paper towel or cloth (don't rub). For most stains, try cold water first then hot water with a little detergent.

**Stainless steel cleaner** – Baking soda.

**Toilet bowl cleaner** – Baking soda and castile soap.

**Tug and tile cleaner** – Use vinegar full-strength on sponge, then use baking soda as scouring powder. Rinse well.

**Wine Stain removal** – Water or rubbing alcohol. Dry

**Window cleaner** – ½ cup vinegar in 1 quart warm water for inside windows. For outside windows, use soap and water; rinse well and dry.

**Garbage disposal deodorizer** – Use lemons or baking soda.



***For more sources of information on this topic visit:***

ST. CLAIR COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT [www.scchealth.co](http://www.scchealth.co)

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY [www.michigan.gov/deq](http://www.michigan.gov/deq)

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES [www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov)