

GET RID OF IT.

A painter's guide to storage, disposal and clean-up of paint wastes

Painters work with a variety of materials including paints, stains, varnishes, thinners, strippers, brush cleaners and other solvents, epoxies, glues, sealants, wood preservatives and aerosol spray paints.

All are considered hazardous waste in California.

It is illegal to dump any of these materials into storm drains. The same is true for sinks, toilets, the trash, and disposal on the ground. Penalties for improper disposal are severe and include fines, incarceration, and responsibility for clean-up costs. By disposing of hazardous paint waste properly through your local Hazardous Waste Collection Program, you can help protect our drinking water and the aquatic life in our creeks and the Bay.

So, how can painters manage hazardous paint wastes easily and economically?

Avoid Paint Disposal

- For small leftover amounts, consider applying an additional coat or combining paint for use as a primer.
- For larger leftover amounts, arrange for the distributor or manufacturer to take back unused or unopened paints, or donate paint to schools, theaters, churches or graffiti projects in need of it.
- Scrape containers with a rubber spatula to remove the most paint. You can salvage up to 9% of your paint this way.

Recycle and Reuse

- Recycle usable latex paint through your local Hazardous Waste Collection Program (see *Numbers to Know* on back).
- Keep latex and oil-based paints separate. Mixing these paints together makes recycling impossible.
- Buy recycled paints. They cost much less than virgin latex paint, are equivalent to most commercially available medium-grade paints and are available in a number of colors.
- Reuse thinners and solvents for equipment cleaning by filtering out particles with reusable wire screen, or by allowing particles to settle out.
- Pick up "re-usable" paint at your local Hazardous Waste Collection Program.

Buy Smart

- Estimate paint needs carefully. Buy and tint/mix only what you think will be used.
- Use latex paints rather than oil-based paints whenever possible. Oil-based paints release harmful fumes, require solvents for cleanup, and cannot be recycled. For contractors: If customers insist on oil-based paints, consider charging an environmental fee to cover your time/costs.
- Avoid toxic components when possible.
 - Look for non-solvent stripping products (citrus-based, peel-away, etc.).
 - Choose solvents that are not chlorinated (for example avoid methylene chloride).
 - Use organic additives for mold, mildew and algae control instead of heavy metal additives, such as mercury.
 - Choose paint pigments that do not contain heavy metals.

THE RIGHT WAY.

Store Safely

- Cover and seal materials tightly to avoid contamination, reduce evaporation and increase product life.
- Store all painting-related products/wastes in a covered area away from floor drains, the gutter, and street and storm drains, both in shop and at the site. Keep absorbent pads on hand to catch any spilled material and to block sewer or storm drains.
- Secure containers in vehicles to avoid spills during transportation.

Use Wisely

- When outdoors, always use tarps and drop cloths to prevent drift and spills and never use cleaning products that may be washed off into the storm drain.
- Block storm drains with hay bales, burlap or sand bags during water or abrasive blasting of building exteriors to prevent paint chips from contaminating surroundings and waterways.

Clean-up with Care

- Never clean equipment in gutters, streets, or storm drains. It is illegal to dispose of any material except plain water into the storm drain.
- Paint out brushes and rollers as much as possible before cleaning, and
 - for Latex Paint: Always clean equipment in a sink connected to the sanitary sewer.
 - for Oil Based Paint: Always reuse cleaning solvents/thinners and look for the least toxic products available.

Getting Rid of Paint Wastes

Bring to Your Local Hazardous Waste Collection Program

- Latex paints
- Solvents and thinners
- Containers which are not empty*
- Contaminated sandblast waste*
- Absorbent materials used to clean up spilled hazardous waste*
- Oil-based paints, stains, varnishes
- Paint and solvent sludge (wet)
- Spackling compound (wet)
- Contaminated paint chips* (lead, mercury, etc.)

*Call County Hazardous Materials Programs at (510) 646-2286 for additional guidance.

Appropriate for Trash Collection

- Dry brushes, rollers and tarps
- Dry paint (do not air-dry oil-based paints)
- Dry empty containers (5 gallons in size or less with no pourable contents)

Numbers to Know

Hazardous Waste Collection Programs

For local disposal options, painters (businesses and residents) should call:	
East and West County	(800) 750-4096
Central County	(800) 646-1431
Contra Costa County Hazardous Materials Programs	(510) 646-2286
Contra Costa County Clean Water Program (storm drains)	(800) NO DUMPING
California State Department of Toxics	(510) 540-3739
Poison Control Center	(800) 876-4766
CAL OSHA	(510) 602-6517

Hazardous Waste Collection Programs for Small Business—An Affordable Solution

Businesses which generate less than 27 gallons or 220 pounds of hazardous waste per month are eligible to use this low-cost program. Call your local Hazardous Waste Collection Program for information.

Lead Hazards

Lead-based paint was commonly used in residential housing until 1978. An estimated 57 million homes in the U.S. were painted with lead-based paints. Inhaling or ingesting microscopic lead particles can cause serious neurological damage. Children are especially susceptible to the effects. Exposure can occur during wall preparation and paint stripping. Only certified contractors should handle material painted with lead-based paint.

For more information, call the following California Department of Health Services programs:

Lead Certification and Training	(800) 597-LEAD
Childhood Lead Prevention Program	(510) 450-2453
Occupational Lead in Construction	(510) 540-3448