

Hazardous Chemicals in our Homes

The average U.S. household contains 5 to 10 gallons of hazardous materials.

Read the label! Products containing hazardous materials should say “poison”, “toxic”, “danger”, or “explosive”.



Read on to learn more about hazardous materials in your home, how you can properly dispose of them, and safer alternatives.



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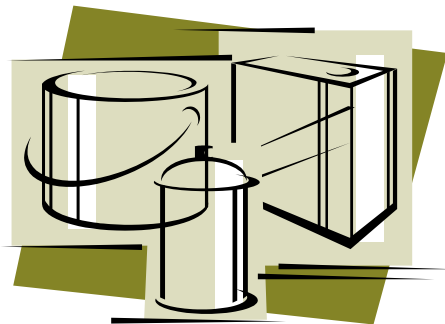
What you can do!

- **Reduction** at the source. Choose safer alternatives whenever possible.
- Only **Buy** the amount that you **need**.
- **Read the labels** and follow instructions for use and disposal.
- **Recycle** materials when possible.
- **Share** usable leftovers with others.
- **Safely Store** unused products in original containers away from children and pets.
- **Properly dispose** of hazardous waste as advised on the Household Hazardous Materials Chart.

Many home and garden products contain potentially dangerous chemicals which are poisonous to people, fish, wildlife, and plants. Some of these products may be immediately fatal. Others may build up in body tissue or the environment, causing future health problems.

Do NOT put Household Hazardous Waste:

- In the trash
- Down the drain
- In the toilet
- On the ground
- In septic tanks



Household Hazardous Materials

* RCC—Regional Collection Center at Dubuque Landfill

Product	Disposal	Hazard	Alternative
Abrasive Cleaners	Use as directed or save for RCC.	Corrosive, toxic	Rub area with ½ lemon dipped in borax, rinse, dry.
Aerosols	Use up or save for RCC.	Flammable, toxic. May destroy ozone	Use non-aerosol sprays, liquids, pastes
Air Fresheners	If used up, place in trash. Otherwise save for RCC.	Toxic, flammable	Open a box of baking soda, natural scents like flowers & spices.
Ammonia Cleaners	Use as directed or save for RCC.	Ammonia, ethanol: Toxic, reactive to chlorine	Vinegar & salt water or baking soda & water.
Ant/Roach Killer	Save for RCC.	Toxic	Roaches: traps of baking soda & powdered sugar. Ants: Red chili powder
Antifreeze	Use as directed, recycle, or save for RCC.	Ethylene, Glycol; toxic	None known.
Bathroom Cleaner	Use as directed or save for RCC.	Corrosive, toxic, irritant.	Baking soda; mild detergent.
Batteries (alkaline)	Place in trash.	Corrosive, reactive, toxic.	None
Batteries (lead-acid)	Recycle. Call (563) 588-7933 or go to www.dmaswa.org for local sites.	Sulfuric acid: corrosive, toxic.	None
Batteries (Mercury)	Save for RCC	Corrosive, reactive, toxic	None
Batteries - rechargeable	Call 1-800-822-8837 for retailer recycling program or save for RCC	Cadmium: Toxic, corrosive, reactive.	None
Brake Fluid	Save for RCC	Corrosive, reactive, toxic	None
Brass Cleaner	Use as directed, otherwise save for RCC	Toxic, corrosive	Worcestershire sauce

Household Hazardous Materials

Product	Disposal	Hazard	Alternative
Carpet Cleaner	Use as directed. Otherwise, save for RCC	Toxic	A mix of corn meal and borax, or just sprinkle baking soda and vacuum.
Car Wax/Polish	Save for RCC If hardened, it can be place in the trash	Toxic corrosive	
Degreaser (engine)	Save for RCC	Flammable, toxic	None
Disinfectants	Use as directed.	Fluorocarbons, phenols: toxic, corrosive	Soap & water, ½ cup borax in 1 gallon water. To inhibit mold and mildew, do not rinse off borax solution
Drain Cleaner	Use as directed. Otherwise, save for RCC	Acids, hypochlorites: Toxic, corrosive	Pour ½ cup baking soda, then ½ cup vinegar down drain. Let stand for 15 minutes, then pour 2 quarts boiling water; use plunger or metal snake.
Fabric dyes	Flush down drain if diluted, If concentrated save for RCC	Corrosive, toxic	None
Fertilizers (chemical)	Use as directed. Save for RCC	Toxic, causes burns	Peat moss blood & fish meal for Nitrogen, bone meal for Potassium.
Flea-Collars, sprays- powders	Use as directed. Collars should be placed in plastic bag and put in trash. Save sprays for RCC	Toxic	Herbal collars or brewers yeast in pet's diet.
Floor wax	Save for RCC	Flammable, toxic	None
Florescent bulbs	Save for RCC		None
Gasoline	Save for RCC	Flammable, toxic, reactive	None

Household Hazardous Materials

Product	Disposal	Hazard	Alternative
Glass cleaner	Use as directed. Otherwise, save for RCC.	Toxic	¼ cup vinegar in 1 quart with warm water (don't use as windshield wiper solution; can damage pump).
Household cleaners	Use as directed. Otherwise, save for RCC.	Toxic	Mix ½ cup ammonia with ½ cup white vinegar, ½ gallon of water, and ¼ cup of soda.
Insecticides/pest control	Save for RCC. Put in plastic container and label. <u>Must</u> keep solids away from liquids.	Arsenicals, Chlorinated hydrocarbons; toxic.	Varies with plant and type of problem. Options include natural biological controls, barriers, and traps. For houseplants spray with soapy water, then rinse.
Motor oil	Recycle at RCC	Flammable, toxic	None known
Oil filters (used)	Recycle: take to oil recycling station.	Toxic	None
Oven cleaner	Save for RCC	Hydroxides: corrosive, toxic	Clean grease with rag & vinegar. Sprinkle salt on spills, let sit a minute, then scrape and wash. Also try baking soda & steel wool
Paint-latex	Check with RCC about usable paint. Dry before putting in trash.	Toxic	Whitewash or casein-based paint.
Paint- oil based	Save for RCC	Flammable, toxic	Latex paint
Paint- hobby	Save for RCC	Flammable, toxic	None
Rug cleaner	Save for RCC	Toxic, corrosive, causes burns	Dry cornstarch sprinkled on rug and vacuumed.
Shoe polish	Put in plastic bag, seal, and put in trash or use as intended.	Toxic	For leather shoes, apply olive or walnut oil or beeswax and buff with chamois cloth.

Household Hazardous Materials

Product	Disposal	Hazard	Alternative
Silver polish	Save for RCC	Corrosive, toxic	Soak in 1qt. warm water containing 1 tsp. salt and piece of aluminum foil; also, toothpaste (not for silver plate).
Swimming pool chemicals	Save for RCC (or contact local wastewater treatment plant for disposal).	Corrosive, toxic, explosive	None
Thermometer (mercury)	Save for RCC	Toxic	Use electronic digital thermometers.
Toilet cleaners	Use as intended. Otherwise, put down drain with lots of water.	Corrosive, toxic, irritant.	Mix ½ cup borax with 1 gallon water.
Transmission fluid	Recycle or save for RCC	Flammable, toxic	None
Windshield wiper fluid	Use if possible, or save for RCC	Toxic	
Weed & brush killer	Save for RCC	Toxic	Pull weeds by hand
Wood preservative	Save for RCC	Toxic, flammable	None
Wood Stains/ varnishes	Use as intended or save for RCC	Toxic, flammable	Natural earth pigment finishes.

*Directions to dispose down drain with large amounts of water do NOT apply to homes with septic tanks. If you have a septic tank, contact RCC for safe disposal.

** Borax is the most caustic of the alternative cleaners. Store it with special care and keep out of reach of children and pets. Latex gloves are advised

The RCC does NOT accept “explosives” as in: bullets, flares, dynamite, gunpowder, etc.



For more information:

Solid Waste Education Office

(563) 588-7933 or

Visit our website at

www.dmaswa.org

Local Regional Collection Center:

Call for an appointment

(563)589-1720.

