

HAZARDOUS WASTE

General Information



The average Canadian household produces 35 litres of hazardous waste each year. Based on this, the 63,000 homes serviced by the Bluewater Recycling Association would produce 2.2 million litres of hazardous waste annually. This is enough to fill five Olympic-sized swimming pools. It would take 166 trucks, totaling one kilometre in length, to hold all this waste. Not including industrial or agricultural hazardous waste, Ontario homes produce a total of 140 million litres per year. This would require over 10,500 fuel trucks stretching from the city of London to Grand Bend to carry this quantity of material.

Hazardous waste is the most dangerous of all wastes. It can immediately affect us and the environment or its full effects may take years to appear. The Ministry of Environment and Energy uses the following definition: **Hazardous Waste is dangerous to human health and the environment. It includes toxic, corrosive, flammable, reactive and radioactive waste from homes, industry and agriculture.**

Agriculture and industry may produce the most hazardous waste by volume and mass, but the biggest threat to the majority of Canadians is our homes. Our closets, cupboards, basements and garages are full of hazardous products, also known as **household hazardous waste**.

Products are considered hazardous when they are corrosive, reactive, flammable, toxic and/or radioactive. These hazards are usually identified by the use of graphic symbols; these symbols are explained in the table.

A product may pose several hazards in which case its container/packaging will have several symbols. A written explanation may accompany or replace the symbols.

Dangers associated with a product can be reduced through careful shopping. Most aerosol cans are explosive; if a product can be purchased in a 'pump', do so. Not only will you reduce the danger of an explosion, you will replace flammable and atmospherically harmful propellants.



CORROSIVE
Substances that eat and wear away at many materials.
ex. battery acid, drain cleaner



FLAMMABLE
Liquids that can ignite under any circumstance.
ex. lighter fluid, turpentine



TOXIC
Materials that, even in small quantities are poisonous.
ex. rat poison, chlorine bleach



REACTIVE
Materials that can create an explosion or deadly vapours.
ex. ammonia, chlorine bleach



RADIOACTIVE
Materials that give off small doses of radiation.
ex. ionizing smoke detectors

The following table explains a variety of common household items that are potentially hazardous. Along with the particular hazard characteristic labeled, there is also disposal directions and information on safer alternatives with 'recipies' you can easily create at home with common products.

Hazardous Waste Depots

Residents of **Middlesex** County can access the London facility at 3502 Manning Drive, off of Wellington Rd South of Highway 401 (519) 661-4585.

Residents from the County of **Lambton** can access a special depot during the last Saturday of most months located at Clean Harbors Canada Inc., near Brigden at 4090 Telfer Road, (519) 845-0801.

Residents of **Huron** and **Perth** County should consult the County office for a list of annual sites offered at varied locations, usually during the spring or fall.

County of Huron
(519) 524-8394
www.huroncounty.ca

County of Perth
(519) 271-0531
www.countyofperth.on.ca

HOUSEHOLD ITEM	HAZARD	DISPOSAL	SAFER ALTERNATIVES
Disinfectants	Toxic	Use existing product, then convert	Use 125mL borax in 4.5 liters of water
Drain Cleaner	Toxic Corrosive	Waste Depot	Use a handful of baking soda with 125mL of vinegar & allow to sit 1 hour then clear out.
Chlorine Bleach	Corrosive Toxic	Use existing product, then convert	Use 1 part hydrogen peroxide to 5 parts of water per load.
Spray Starch	Flammable	Use existing product, then convert	Mix 15mL corn starch with 250mL water in pump spray bottle
Paint Strippers	Flammable Toxic	Waste Depot	Use a heat gun and sandpaper.
Stains & Finishes	Toxic Flammable	Waste Depot	Use latex paint or natural earth pigment finishes
Fertilizers	Toxic	Use existing product, then convert	Organic fertilizer, compost, mulch
Herbicides	Toxic	Waste Depot	Keep grass short, hand weeding
Dish Detergents	Phosphates	Use existing product, then convert	Use commercial phosphate free or environmentally friendly soaps
Silver Polish	Corrosive Toxic	Waste Depot	Soak in boiling water with baking soda, salt & a piece of aluminum
Floor Cleaner	Corrosive Toxic	Waste Depot	Use 75mL washing soda & 125mL ammonia in 4 litres of warm water
Furniture Polish	Toxic	Use existing product, then convert	Use 1 part lemon juice to 2 parts olive or vegetable oil
Batteries	Toxic	Waste Depot	Use rechargeable batteries or adapter & power cord

