

# Household Hazardous Waste

## PAINT

### WHY IS PAINT A HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE?

Paint contains solvents and metals that are poisonous to humans and the environment. When paint is disposed of improperly - in the garbage, down a drain or on the ground - these chemicals can contaminate lakes, rivers, and the underground water system. For this reason, paint cannot be put into the garbage bin.

### WHAT CAN I DO WITH LEFT OVER PAINT?

Use it up! If you can't use your leftover paint, give it to someone who can.

Give your paint to:

- friends and neighbours
- community service organisations
- theatre groups
- pony clubs
- schools and day care centres, etc.

### HOW CAN I TELL IF MY PAINT IS STILL GOOD?

Paint stays in good condition for a long time: oil-based paint lasts for up to 15 years and latex paint lasts for up to 10 years. As a general rule, paint that is labelled, fills at least a third of its container, hasn't been frozen and thawed repeatedly and mixes when stirred can still be used. If your latex paint has been frozen, brush a small amount on a sheet of newspaper. If there are no lumps, it hasn't been damaged and can be used.

### WHAT IF I CAN'T FIND A WAY TO USE MY PAINT?

You can take your left over paint to the Chemical Clean Out Collection which is held in the Shire yearly or you can dry out your paint according to the directions below before placing it in your bin.

1. Find a well-ventilated work area away from children, pets, open flames and rain. Locked screen porches and well ventilated garages work well. Good ventilation is important when working with oil based paints because fumes can be harmful to your health and a fire hazard.
2. Dry it out. *For small quantities of paint.*
  - Remove the lid and let the paint dry in the can.
  - Stir the paint to speed dry.

*For larger quantities of paint:*

- Brush paint in layers on newspaper or cardboard.
- Or, pour about 25 millimetre layers of paint into a cardboard box lined with plastic. Allow the paint to dry one layer at a time.
- Or, mix paint with kitty litter, sawdust or sand in a cardboard box lined with plastic and let it dry.

*For paint that has separated:*

- Pour the clear liquid on top into a cardboard box lined with plastic.
- Mix the liquid with an equal amount of kitty litter or other absorbent material.
- Let the leftover paint in the bottom of the can to dry out.

3. Discard the dried paint. Throw the dried paint, boxes, newspaper and absorbent material into the garbage. Leave the lids off the paint cans so the garbage collectors can see that the paint is dry.

## **HOW LONG WILL THIS TAKE?**

It will take between several days and several months, depending on the type and quantity of paint that you have.

## **WHAT IF I AM MOVING SOON?**

- Find someone who can use up the leftover paint.
- Have a friend or neighbour dry it out for you.
- Take your paint to your new home and dry it there.

## **HOW CAN I AVOID FUTURE PAINT DISPOSAL PROBLEMS?**

Be a careful consumer!

- Buy only the amount of paint you need. Measure the space you need to paint and ask the hardware or paint store personnel to help you buy the right amount.
- Use up leftover paint before you buy more.
- Avoid purchasing exotic colours that you will not be able to use for another project.
- Apply another coat to use up leftover paint.
- Store cans of leftover paint with the lid side down to prolong its shelf life. Be sure the lid is tightly closed. The paint will seal the can to prevent hardening or moisture damage. Store cans in a dry area where the paint won't freeze.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT HAZARDOUS WASTE, CONTACT:**

- Eurobodalla Shire Council's Waste Minimisation Officer on 4474 1029
- Department of Environment and Climate Change on 131555

