

Paint Disposal

Disposal of left over paint through a household hazardous waste program is expensive.

The best thing to do with usable paint is to use it up! If you can't use your leftover paint, give it to someone who can. Give your paint to:

- friends and neighbors
- recreation departments
- park departments
- theater groups
- housing assistance organizations

Disposal: Latex and Small amounts of Oil-based Paint

Dry out latex paint and small quantities of oil-based paint according to the following directions:

Step 1 Find an outside work area away from children, pets and rain. Locked screen porches and storage sheds work well. Because oil-based paint contains solvents and some latex paint contains mercury, it's important to dry out paint outdoors in a safe place.

Step 2 Dry it out. Choose one of the drying methods described later on this page. Paint will take between several days and several months to dry - it depends on the type and quantity of paint that you have.

Step 3 Throw the dried paint, cans and other materials in the trash. Leave the lids off paint cans so trash collectors will see the paint is dry and accept them.

Paint Drying Techniques

For small amounts (Oil-based and latex): Brush paint in layers on newspaper or cardboard.

For larger amounts of latex: Pour thin layers (less than one-inch) of paint into a cardboard box lined with plastic. Allow paint to dry one layer at a time - thin layers will speed up the drying process.

Or, mix paint with cat litter, sawdust or sand in a cardboard box lined with plastic and let it dry.