



# BMPs

## Best Management Practices for N.H. Solid Waste Facilities

### Paint

Getting rid of left over paint can be a big problem. Certain types of paint, paint thinners and strippers are made with hazardous ingredients that have the potential to be harmful to humans, animals, ground water and the environment.

Proper disposal depends on the type of paint:

**Water-based (latex) paint disposal** – Latex paints are the least harmful. If they cannot be donated for use by others, they can be placed in the regular trash in a dried up or solidified state. Mixing the paints with cat litter or sawdust is one way to solidify them.

**Oil-based, lead-based or solvent-based paint disposal** – These paints contain hazardous ingredients. If they are being thrown out by private individuals rather than businesses, they are considered household hazardous waste (HHW) and should be taken to a HHW collection facility or event. If they are being thrown out by non-household sources, like painting contractors or auto body shops, they can not be managed at solid waste facilities. They must be taken by registered hazardous waste transporters to authorized hazardous waste facilities.

**Aerosol paint disposal** – Aerosol paints are made with hazardous propellants and solvents. As noted above, if they come from household sources, they should be taken to a HHW collection facility or event. If they come from businesses, they cannot be managed at solid waste facilities and must be transported to authorized hazardous waste facilities by registered hazardous waste transporters.

**Artist or hobby paint disposal** – Paints for art may contain solvents or heavy metals and should also be disposed of at a HHW event or facility if they come from household sources. If they come from businesses, they can not be managed at solid waste facilities and must be transported to authorized hazardous waste facilities by registered hazardous waste transporters.

#### Best Management Practices for Paint

- Learn to recognize the various types of paint and understand their proper disposal methods.
- Inspect incoming waste for paint and make sure it goes to the right location for disposal.
- Encourage residents to keep leftover paint for future use or donate it to be used by others, rather than disposing of it.
- Encourage residents to save non-latex paint for collection by a special paint collection program or household hazardous waste collection event offered in your area.
- Encourage residents to buy only the quantity of paint they need for the job they are doing. This is the best way to reduce the amount of waste paint your facility may have to handle.

#### Did You Know?

- Paint produced before 1992 may contain mercury. If you think you may have pre-1992 paint, contact the manufacturer or NHDES to find out about proper disposal methods.
- Paint is the most common waste brought to HHW collection events.
- Paint can be recycled in some areas of the country. For more information, contact the Household Hazardous Waste Coordinator.

- If your facility is a transfer station and you want to accept non-latex paint from residents – even small amounts – so you can dispose of it separately from the regular trash, you will need to obtain hazardous waste generator status and follow NHDES Hazardous Waste Rules applicable to generators. Contact the NHDES Household Hazardous Waste Coordinator for technical assistance.
- Remove the lids of paint cans before they are thrown in with the regular trash to make sure the paint is no longer in liquid form.
- Recycle empty paint cans.
- Keep materials and equipment nearby to clean up spills or leaks when they happen.
- Never dispose of liquid paint in a landfill.



These paint containers are stored outside without secondary containment and exposed to the weather. Some of the containers are in bad condition without readable labels.



These paint containers are stored indoors in a closeable storage unit, separated by waste type. Their labels are intact and readable.

**For additional information, contact:**  
 Solid Waste Management Bureau  
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