

A CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

Cleaning products like aerosols, bathroom and drain cleaners, and car supplies like waxes, starter fluids and repair products are all considered household hazardous wastes. Many ingredients in these products are corrosive or reactive, and if they aren't disposed of properly, they can harm people and contaminate our rivers, lakes and drinking water. Simple alternatives can replace many hazardous substances. If you choose to use commercial products, however, make sure to dispose of them properly!

If you see the words **DANGER**, **CAUTION WARNING** or **TOXIC**, you're probably handling a household hazardous waste.

Tips for handling toxics

- Store household hazardous wastes in their original containers, and make sure the labels are readable.
- Save money and reduce waste by purchasing only what you need and use.
- Let solvents and paint thinners set in a closed jar to let dirt and paint settle to the bottom. You can reuse the top portion, and dispose of less waste!
- Never pour motor oil, paints or chemicals directly down the sink or into a catch basin in the street.
- Recycle or dispose of them properly. For disposal locations and drop-off dates, call Kalamazoo County Household Hazardous Waste Center at (269) 373-5211, or go to www.earth911.com where you can enter your zipcode to locate the nearest disposal site.

Non-toxic alternatives - Homemade solutions to prevent pollution

- To disinfect, use one-half cup borax or washing soda* dissolved in one gallon hot water.
- To clean floors, use 1/4 cup white vinegar, 1/4 cup washing soda* in one gallon warm water.
- For glass cleaner, mix one part vinegar to four parts water. Dry windows with newspapers.
- To unclog drains, use a plumber snake instead of drain cleaners.
- Instead of toilet cleaner, scrub with a toilet brush and baking soda.
- To deodorize carpets, sprinkle with baking soda, and vacuum after 30 minutes.

**Be sure to use washing soda (sodium carbonate) in these recipes and not baking soda (sodium bicarbonate).*

For more information, visit our website:

