

# PRO P **FACT** Sheet

## Reducing Household Hazardous Waste

A number of commonly used household products are actually very toxic and should be avoided. Residues from these wastes are among the most difficult problems associated with leaking landfills. (Even today's well-constructed and monitored sanitary landfills leak to some degree.) Additionally, many of these raise serious health concerns around the house. A National Cancer Institute study showed childhood leukemia was 6.5 times more likely to occur in households that use pesticides.



### **Product**

Bug Killers

### **Problems**

May cause long-term health problems with the nervous reproductive systems.

### **Alternatives**

Biological controls  
Plant-derived insecticides  
Prevention

Weed Killers/  
Lawn Chemicals

Many are proven or suspected carcinogens. Phenoxy/2, 4-D causes nervous and reproductive problems.

Hand pulling weeds  
Higher grass cutting  
Enjoy the color of dandelions in the spring.

Oil Paints, Paints,  
Varnishes & Nail  
Polishes

Most solvents in these products are central nervous system depressants.

Latex paints  
Solvent-free paints

Solvents/Thinners

Many of these can cause nervous system and liver damage.

Biodegradable solvents  
Water-based products

Treated Wood &  
Preservatives

Creosote & arsenic compounds are carcinogenic.

Rot-resistant woods  
Recycled "lumber"

Disinfectants,  
Mothballs &  
Furniture Polish

Benzene and ethylene glycol chemicals cause liver and kidney damage.

Borax & hot water  
Cedar chips  
Lemon juice & vegetable oil

Motor Oil

Pollutes surface & ground water. Contains benzene & heavy metals.

Recycle at service garage  
Take car to garage

Drain Openers

Causes severe skin burns & eye irritation

Baking soda & vinegar  
Plunger or snake device

Auto Batteries

Contains lead & sulfuric acid

Recycle with retailer

Antifreeze

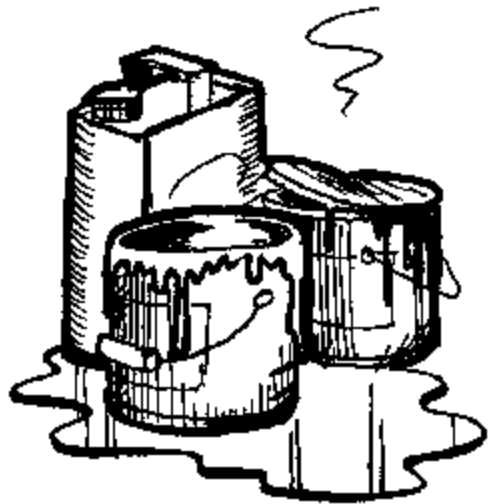
Can cause severe nausea  
Harmful to pets if ingested

Take car to garage

### *How to Solidify Paint:*

Follow directions carefully to avoid causing harm to human health or the environment. If you have a chronic respiratory problem, such as asthma, ask someone else to solidify the paint, as the fumes might trigger symptoms. Please note that these suggestions are only for household quantities of leftover paint. Read all directions before starting.

*You will need nitrile gloves, an old bucket or sturdy cardboard box, a stick for stirring and absorbent materials, such as clay-based kitty litter. Please note it is important to avoid using a paper-based product for the absorbent, as spontaneous combustion may occur.*



1. Select a location where there is plenty of fresh air and which is inaccessible to children and pets. Outside is the best choice. Make sure you are away from fire, pilot lights, flammable chemicals or other sources of sparks or flames.
2. Do not smoke, eat or drink (especially alcohol) while solidifying paint. Avoid inhaling fumes (if you can smell it, you are inhaling it) and wear nitrile gloves to avoid skin contact. Nitrile gloves are available in most hardware stores. If you wear contact lenses, remove them while solidifying paint.
3. For small quantities, such as one or two inches in the bottom of a can, simply remove the lid, add the absorbent, and stir until all liquid is absorbed or remove the lid until the paint has solidified. This could take several days or weeks, depending on the amount of paint in the can.
4. For larger quantities of paint, mix absorbent and paint in an old bucket or sturdy cardboard box and stir. It will be easier to mix if you pour some absorbent in the bottom of the bucket or box, and then add a little bit of paint at a time.
5. When paint is solidified, place the absorbent and boxes inside a garbage bag, seal tightly, and dispose of in the trash. Recycle the empty cans in your curbside or drop-off recycling bin.