

# What is Household Hazardous Waste?

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) is common household products that exhibit the characteristics of hazardous waste. As a result, these products may be harmful to humans and/or the environment. Many of these products are very common and are usually purchased from hardware, automotive, and grocery stores. These products can be used and found in our homes, garages, gardens and on our lawns.

Because these products are so common and easy to purchase, many people forget that these products can be extremely harmful to their health or the environment.

For example, common household products like toilet bowl and oven cleaners can potentially cause burns, blindness, nausea, and shortness of breath.

## Reducing HHW in Your Home

Consider reducing your purchase of products that contain hazardous ingredients. Learn about the use of alternative methods or products, without hazardous ingredients, for some common household needs. When shopping for items such as multipurpose household cleaners, toilet cleaners, laundry detergent, dish soap, dishwashing machine pods and gels, bug sprays and insect pest control, consider shopping for environmentally friendly, natural products or search online for simple recipes you can use to create your own.

*Here are a few examples:*

**Drain Cleaner**-use a plunger or plumber's snake.

**Glass Cleaner**-Mix one tablespoon vinegar or lemon juice in one quart of water. Spray on and use newspaper to dry.

**Furniture Polish**-Mix one tablespoon of lemon juice into one pint of mineral or vegetable oil and wipe furniture.

**Rug Deodorizer**-Liberally sprinkle carpets with baking soda. Wait at least 15 minutes and vacuum. Repeat if necessary.

**Silver Polish**-Boil two to three inches of water in a shallow pan with one teaspoon of salt, one teaspoon of baking soda and a sheet of aluminum foil. Totally submerge silver and boil for two to three minutes. Wipe away tarnish and repeat if necessary.

**Mothballs**-Use cedar chips, lavender flowers, rosemary, mints or white peppercorns.

<https://www.epa.gov/saferchoice>



# Town of Whitingham



# **HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE INFORMATION**

## What is HHW? (continued)

Automotive products such as gasoline, oil, and antifreeze can be extremely harmful to the environment. According to the EPA, just one gallon of used oil can pollute one million gallons of drinking water. Used oil that ends up in Vermont's waterways can threaten aquatic life. Antifreeze can be extremely toxic to children and pets, potentially causing liver and brain damage, and cardiac failure.

Lawn and garden products such as pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers can be washed off lawns and gardens by the rain, and ultimately end up in the water supply. These products can kill fish, insects, and can bioaccumulate in the environment causing harm to animals. One infamous example is the pesticide DDT causing major health problems in birds of prey.



### How Do I Know if a Product is Hazardous?

Products that contain potential harmful ingredients are required to provide a label that informs you why the product is hazardous, the harm it could cause to humans, ways to avoid exposure, and the necessary first aid procedures in the event of accidental exposure.

Reading the label thoroughly and closely following the instructions for use may prevent an exposure situation. The label will provide information on safe use. It will also include a combination of the product's hazardous characteristics, and key signal words to alert the user of potential dangers.

## Hazardous Characteristics:



**Flammable** - There are three types of ignitable forms:

**Liquids** with a flash point less than 140 degrees Fahrenheit. Examples include alcohol, gasoline, and acetone.

**Solids** capable of causing fire through friction, absorption of moisture or spontaneous chemical changes.

**Oxidizers and compressed ignitable gasses.**

**Poison/Toxic** – means that it is potentially poisonous if eaten, breathed, or absorbed through the skin. Examples include pesticides and antifreeze.

**Explosive/Reactive** – means unstable, and routinely experiences violent change; potential for explosive mixture or violent reaction when combined with water; toxic gasses are released when mixed with water.

**Corrosive** – means that it can burn or destroy other materials including living tissue. Examples include toilet bowl cleaner and photographic fixer solution.

### Please do NOT bring the following to HHW collection events:

- Asbestos
- Explosives, including gun powder
- Flares
- Infectious waste
- Prescription medications
- Radioactive waste, including smoke detectors

### EXAMPLES OF HHW ITEMS:

#### Household Items:

Air Fresheners	Mothballs
Ammonia	Mercury Thermometers
Arts & Craft Supplies	Nail Polish/Remover
Bleach	Spot and Stain Removers
Cleaners (includes: drain, oven, floor, window, rug, etc.)	
Disinfectants	
Metal & Furniture Polish	

#### Garden Supplies:

Creosote	Insect Sprays
Dioxins	Muriatic acid
Fertilizers	No-pest strips
Flea Killers	Pesticides
Fungicides	Rodent killers
Herbicides	

#### Garage:

Antifreeze	Lighter fluid
Brake Fluid	Oil based paint
Corrosives	Paint thinner
Car waxes & cleaners	Sealants
Engine degreasers	Stains/strippers
Gasoline/dry gas	Swimming pool chemicals
Kerosene	Transmission fluid
Latex paint	Wood preservatives



The Whitingham Transfer Station collects batteries (all kinds), mercury bulbs (CFLs, fluorescent tubes, etc.) and mercury thermostats during regular business hours. Please DO NOT put these items in the trash!