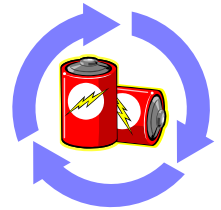


Disposing of and Recycling Household Products and Electronics

When air, water or land becomes polluted, it's often difficult and expensive -- and sometimes impossible -- to clean it up. Preventing pollution is cheaper than either waste management or cleanup. Many household products such as, paint, batteries, hazardous chemicals, compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL), and even electronics contain toxic elements that can be harmful to the environment, you and your family if not disposed of properly. To ensure a safe and healthy home and environment, follow these tips for disposal and recycling of hazardous household wastes:

Batteries

Batteries contain lead, mercury, and cadmium. These compounds should not be burned or put in landfills. When burned, these toxic compounds enter the air and food chain. In landfills, they can slowly penetrate ground water.



Chicago now has a city-wide battery collection program where batteries can be dropped off at any Chicago Public Library or Walgreens Drug Store. These locations accept alkaline and rechargeable batteries, but not lead-acid car batteries. Chicago, together with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), holds several hazardous household wastes collections annually. These collections accept normal alkaline batteries, rechargeable and car batteries at no charge. For more information on dates and locations of collections visit the IEPA's website at www.epa.state.il.us/land/hazardous-waste/household-haz-waste/index.html or call City of Chicago Department of Streets and Sanitation at (312) 744-4611. To find a recycling center that accepts batteries in your area, visit www.earth911.org.

Computers/ Electronics

Computers, printers, televisions, cellular phones, stereos, fax machines, DVD players and VCRs are all recyclable. Electronics are usually made using hazardous materials such as lead, arsenic, mercury, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's) that should not be dumped in a landfill. Computers alone contain several pounds of lead in each monitor and a variety of other chemicals.



Before throwing out your unwanted electronics, consider giving them to a relative or friend, donating unwanted items to a local charity or recycling them. Many recycling centers in Illinois accept electronics. Some computer manufacturers have created recycling centers for PC's and have agreements with charities that will accept them. Visit www.epa.state.il.us, http://www.illinoisrecycles.org/byteback_text.html, www.earth911.org or call the toll-free Environmental Helpline at (888) 372-1996 to search for recycling centers/programs near you.

Paint (non-latex paint)

The IEPA reported that about 25% of the waste it collects at household hazardous waste events is paint. Paint makes up a large portion of hazardous waste that is improperly disposed of. If not properly discarded, waste from paint cans enter storm drains and flow into rivers and streams, harming aquatic wildlife.

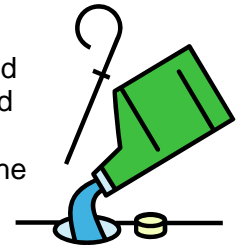


Many paint retailers in Illinois are accepting unwanted paint where it may be reformulated or remixed for reuse. For a list of local retailers accepting paint, visit the IEPA's **Partners for Waste Paint Solutions Program** at www.epa.state.il.us/land/citizen-involvement/paint.html, or

www.epa.state.il.us/land/hazardous-waste for information on the IEPA's household hazardous waste collection events.

Motor Oil

Motor oil can have devastating effects on the environment. A single gallon of used motor oil has the ability to make a million gallons of fresh water undrinkable. Used motor oil, when poured down the drain, enters sewage treatment plants. It only takes a small concentration of used motor oil to contaminate the water and ruin the treatment process. When used motor oil is dumped into bodies of water such as ponds, a film of oil forms on the surface of the water and prevents sunlight and oxygen from entering the water which then harms or possibly kills plant and animal life.



An Illinois state law banned used liquid motor oil from landfills as of July 1, 1996. Service stations and retail outlets throughout Illinois have begun accepting used motor oil for reuse and recycling. The IEPA also accepts used motor oil in their household hazardous waste collection events. For more information on motor oil, its effects, and local recycling centers accepting used motor oil visit <http://illinois.earth911.org/master.asp?s=lib&a=oil/default.asp>.

Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs (CFL)

Compact fluorescent light bulbs or lamps (CFLs) save more energy and last up to 10 times longer than regular light bulbs. Since CFLs contain a small amount of mercury, which can be hazardous to one's health if ingested or breathed in, it is important to handle and dispose of CFLs correctly. To locate recycling centers/programs near you that accept CFLs, visit www.illinois.earth911.org/master.asp?s=ls&a=HHW&cat=9&serviceid=



Medicines

All unwanted or expired medicines should be carefully disposed of. First, check with your local pharmacist/pharmacy and public health department or go to www.earth911.org to locate the nearest medication disposal site/program. If one is not available, the IPC recommends flushing all unwanted or expired medicines down the toilet to prevent ingestion by children and animals.

Paper, Plastics, Glass and Metals

While it is extremely important to properly dispose of hazardous household wastes, it is also important to remember to recycle paper, plastic, glass metals (ex: aluminum and steel).

For More Information on Waste Disposal, Recycling and Recycling Centers:

www.cityofchicago.org (see "Community and Neighborhoods")
www.earth911.org (also available by phone at 1-800-CLEANUP)
<http://www.epa.gov/region02/r3/> (How to Reduce, Reuse, Recycle)
www.eia.doe.gov/kids/energyfacts/saving
www.epa.state.il.us/

www.commerce.state.il.us/dceo/Bureaus/Energy_Recycling/Recycling
http://www.nrdc.org/greensquad/intro/intro_1.asp (This site is designed primarily for students in fifth through eighth grade, but also offers information for younger and older students as well as parents and teachers.)

www.illinoispoisoncenter.org (For a variety of free poison prevention educational materials and online Poison Prevention Educator Training Course)

