

Well-A-Syst

A voluntary program to assist private drinking well users evaluate and modify practices to protect their drinking water supply

Household Hazardous Waste Management

Why should you be concerned?

Household products such as paints, oils, cleaners, batteries, adhesives, and pesticides often are spilled, buried, or dumped onto rural property. Some common but unsafe disposal practices not only threaten your drinking water, but also may be illegal. Proper use and disposal of these products can reduce both health risks and the potential for contamination to your water supply.

Evaluate your household hazardous waste management by answering the following questions.

1. Do you dispose of household products such as furniture polish, paints, stains, and cleaners and/or their containers on your property?
2. Do you dispose of used petroleum products, antifreeze, or lead–acid batteries on your property?
3. Do you dispose of leftover or banned pesticides and/or pesticide containers on your property?

If you answered “yes” or you do not know the answer to any of these questions, use this worksheet to address those issues. The information will help you develop a voluntary plan of action to reduce the contamination risks to your well.

1. Do you dispose of household products such as furniture polish, paints, stains, and cleaners and/or their containers on your property?

Small amounts of household chemicals such as some furniture polishes, paints, stains, and drain cleaners can contaminate your water supply. Improper disposal of such products in trash pits or burn barrels over the years may lead to a build-up of hazardous chemicals in a small area. When concentrated, the potential for these chemicals to impair water quality increases significantly.

2. Do you dispose of used petroleum products, antifreeze, or lead–acid batteries on your property?

Do not dispose of these materials on your property. One quart of oil can contaminate 1 million quarts (250,000 gallons) of water. Most states have laws regulating their proper disposal. Contact your local or state health department or water quality agency to determine disposal procedures for these products. These products should be stored in a secure container on an impervious surface at least 150 feet from your well and surface water.

3. Do you dispose of leftover pesticides and/or pesticide containers on your property?

Pesticides and pesticide containers, including those used for yard care and indoor plants, may lead to contamination of your water supply if not properly used, stored, or disposed. Keep all pesticides in a secure facility with an impervious surface at least 150 feet from your well. Particular attention should be used when dealing with pesticides classified as “restricted use.”

Old, unused and banned pesticides should never be disposed of on your property. They should be stored in a safe place until used or properly disposed of. Many counties have programs to collect such pesticides or other hazardous materials. Contact your county health department, CSU Cooperative Extension or Colorado Department of Agriculture for more information.

Glossary

contaminant

a substance which makes another substance impure or unsuitable for its original use; may include a chemical material, organic material, live organism, radioactive material or heated or cooled water

sanitary landfill

a system of trash and garbage disposal in which the waste is buried between layers of earth

Contacts

CSU Cooperative Extension (State Office)
(970) 491-6172

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division
(303) 692-3300

Colorado Department of Agriculture
(303) 239-4140

Well*A*Syst Worksheets

Private Drinking Water Well Management
Cistern Management
Site Assessment
Septic System Management
Household Hazardous Waste Management

Livestock Management
Fertilizer Management
Pesticide Management
Petroleum Storage Management

Well*A*Syst is a joint project developed for Colorado by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Colorado State University Cooperative Extension; Colorado Department of Agriculture; the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Water Quality Control Division; the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, State Soil Conservation Board; and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

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Household Hazardous Waste Management

If you answered "Yes" or did not know the answer to the previous questions	What to do	Who to call	What you did
1, 2, 3	Obtain information about recycling and disposal. Develop a secure storage area and find out how to handle hazardous material spills and emergencies.	CSU Cooperative Extension; Colorado Department of Agriculture; County health department; Local landfill/solid waste disposal company	

How To Dispose of Household Hazardous Material

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS MATERIAL: THINK BEFORE YOU DUMP IT

When you dump a can of paint thinner down the drain or throw an old car battery out with the trash, you could be poisoning your water supply. That's because wastewater treatment plants are not designed to handle certain types of hazardous wastes. And in landfills, these dangerous materials can pollute the environment through the ground water, surface water, and air.

You can help protect your environment if you know how to take care of the wastes. The chart on the reverse side shows you the most effective ways to dispose of common hazardous material used around the home or garden. The information is intended as a general guideline because laws and regulations may vary from state to state. Additionally, product formulation can change over time. Be sure to check manufacturer's label for specific disposal guidelines, and above all use common sense!

For more information on the safest way to dispose of the products on the chart, contact your state's solid and hazardous waste department or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. You may also want to note important local phone numbers below:

Hazardous Waste Management Agency _____

Poison Control Center _____

The following chart is based on information from the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Hazardous Waste regulations. The Water Environment Federation assumes no responsibility and disclaims any liability for any injury or damage resulting from the use or effect of any product or information specified in this publication. Copyright © 1987 by the Water Environment Federation.

HOW TO DISPOSE OF HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTES

Type of Waste	●	◆	□	❖
KITCHEN				
 Aerosol cans (empty)		◆		
Aluminum cleaners	●			
Ammonia based cleaners	●			
Bug sprays			□	
Drain cleaners	●			
Floor care products			□	
Furniture polish			□	
Metal polish with solvent			□	
Window cleaner	●			
Oven cleaner (lye base)		◆		
BATHROOM				
Alcohol based lotions (aftershave, perfumes, etc.)	●			
Bathroom cleaners	●			
Depilatories	●			
Disinfectants	●			
Permanent lotions	●			
Hair relaxers	●			
Medicine (expired)	●			
Nail polish (solidified)		◆		
Toilet bowl cleaner	●			
Tub and tile cleaners	●			

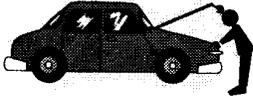
Identifies hazardous wastes which should be saved for a community-wide collection day or given to a licensed hazardous wastes contractor. (Even the empty containers should be taken to a licensed contractor if one is available.)



Type of Waste

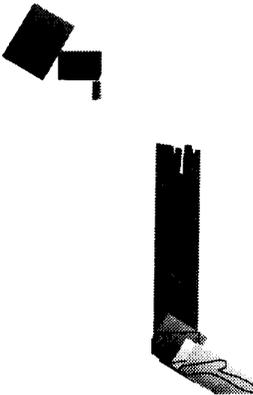
● ◆ □ ❖

GARAGE



Antifreeze				❖
Automatic transmission fluid			□	❖
Auto body repair products		◆		
Battery acid (or battery)			□	❖
Brake fluid			□	
Car wax with solvent			□	
Diesel fuel			□	❖
Fuel oil			□	❖
Gasoline			□	❖
Kerosene			□	❖
Metal polish with solvent			□	
Motor oil			□	❖
Other oils			□	
Windshield washer solution	●			

WORKSHOP



Paint brush cleaner with solvent			□	❖
Paint brush cleaner with TSP	●			
Aerosol cans (empty)		◆		
Cutting oil			□	
Glue (solvent based)			□	
Glue (water based)	●			
Paint — latex		◆		
Paint — oil based			□	
Paint — auto			□	
Paint — model			□	
Paint thinner			□	❖
Paint stripper			□	
Paint stripper (lye based)	●			
Primer			□	
Rust remover (with phosphoric acid)	●			
Turpentine			□	❖
Varnish			□	❖
Wood preservative			□	

LAWNS, GARDENS AND FIELDS



Fertilizer		◆		
Fungicide			□	
Herbicide			□	
Insecticide			□	
Rat poison			□	
Weed killer			□	

MISCELLANEOUS



Ammunition			□	
Artists' paints, mediums			□	
Dry cleaning solvents			□	❖
Fiberglass epoxy			□	
Gun cleaning solvents			□	❖
Lighter fluid			□	
Mercury batteries			□	
Moth balls			□	
Old fire alarms			□	
Photographic chemicals (unmixed)			□	
Photographic chemicals (mixed and properly diluted)	●			
Shoe polish		◆		
Swimming pool acid			□	

◆ Identifies materials which cannot be poured down the drain, but can be safely disposed of in a sanitary landfill. Be certain the material is properly contained before it is put out for collection or carried to the landfill.

● Identifies products which can be poured down the drain with plenty of water. If you have a septic tank, additional caution should be exercised when dumping these items down the drain. In fact, there are certain chemical substances that cannot be used with a septic tank. Read the labels to determine if a product could damage the septic tank.

❖ If there is a recycling program in your area, take these recyclable materials there. If not, encourage local officials to start such a program.