



# TOO TOXIC TO TRASH

## Your Guide To Household Hazardous Waste



By San Mateo County Environmental Health Services  
Household Hazardous Waste Program



SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH  
**ENVIRONMENTAL  
HEALTH SERVICES**

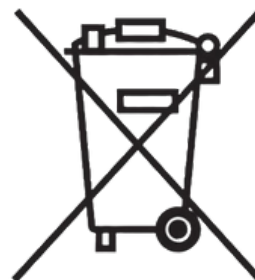


# WHAT IS HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE?

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) are items used in and around your home that can be harmful or dangerous to humans, animals, and the environment. They may be toxic, corrosive, flammable, or reactive based on their chemical properties.

It's illegal and unsafe to dump HHW in the trash or down the drain. This Guide presents the many easy and free ways to safely remove and dispose of these items from your home.

**DO NOT DUMP HHW IN THE TRASH OR DOWN THE DRAIN.**



## COMMON HHW ITEMS



### PAINT

Paints contain heavy metals like chromium, lead, and zinc. Specialty coatings such as urethanes, epoxy, and resins are hazardous in liquid form due to the toxicity of uncured resins and epoxies.



### BATTERIES

Batteries can corrode and allow harmful chemicals to leach into the soil and make their way into our water supply.



### FLUORESCENT LIGHTS

Fluorescent lights contain mercury, a neurotoxin, sealed within the glass tubing. Avoid breathing in vapors of broken fluorescent lamps. They are no longer sold in California.



### HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS

Household cleaners often contain ingredients that are toxic, corrosive, or flammable.



### AUTOMOTIVE SUPPLIES

One quart of motor oil can pollute up to 250,000 gallons of clean water.



[See here for the full list of common HHW items](#)



# HOW TO IDENTIFY A HAZARDOUS PRODUCT

Hazardous products contain ingredients that may be toxic, harmful, or pose other risks to health and safety, requiring us to use and handle them with care. It is crucial to always read and follow the safety instructions on the label.

**Hazardous products contain a signal word indicating the level of toxicity, and possibly a hazard statement informing us of potential harm and a hazard pictogram.**

**Examples:**



Irritant

**CAUTION** → Slightly toxic. May cause slight eye or skin irritation.



Corrosive

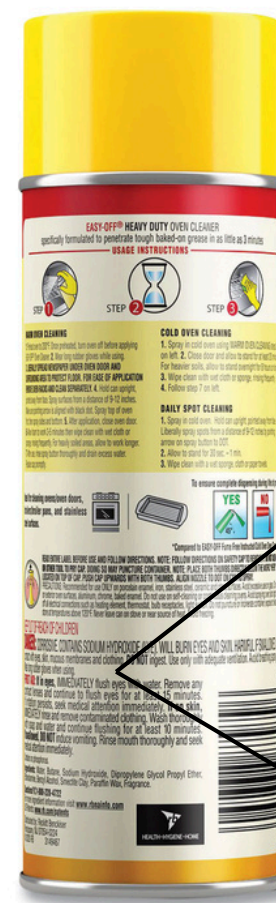
**WARNING** → Products with moderate toxicity. These products can cause moderate skin and eye damage.



Flammable

**DANGER** → Corrosive. Causes severe skin and eye damage. Flammable, may cause fire.

**POISON** → Extremely toxic ingredients. You may find this on pesticides, oven cleaners, or drain openers.



**LOOK AT THE LABEL FOR A WARNING**



For more information, visit [dtsc.ca.gov/household-hazardous-waste/](https://dtsc.ca.gov/household-hazardous-waste/)

# 3 FREE WAYS TO SAFELY DISPOSE OF HHW

## 1 LOCAL DROP-OFF AT A COLLECTION CENTER NEAR YOU

Please be sure to call your desired location prior to dropping off to verify hours, limitations, and requirements.

### BATTERIES, PAINT, FLUORESCENT LIGHTS

There are over 50 free locations throughout San Mateo County to properly and safely dispose of these items. See the list and map of all locations [here](#).

For more paint disposal options, visit [paintcare.org](http://paintcare.org)

### USED MOTOR OIL AND FILTERS

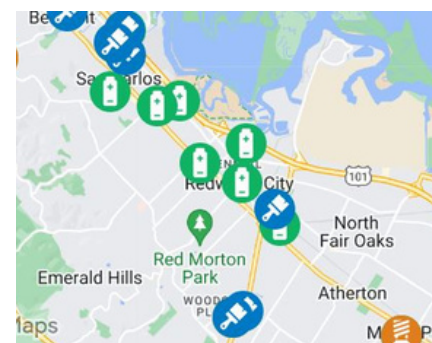
There are over 50 used oil and filter collection centers in San Mateo County, such as auto parts retailers, auto repair shops, and more. See the list and map of all locations [here](#).

### SHOREWAY PUBLIC RECYCLING CENTER (SAN CARLOS)

Selected HHW items accepted: batteries, fluorescent lights, paint, and used motor oil/filters. See the full list of items they accept [here](#).



FOR MORE INFORMATION  
VISIT [SMCHealth.org/HHW-MOST-WANTED](http://SMCHealth.org/HHW-MOST-WANTED)  
OR CALL (650) 372-6200





# 2

## DROP OFF AT AN HHW EVENT NEAR YOU

Live in San Mateo County? Drop off your HHW at free events throughout the county. Most events occur on Saturdays and an appointment is required.

Check out the 2025 HHW drop-off event schedule below. To make an appointment and see current information, visit [smchealth.org/hhw-appt](https://smchealth.org/hhw-appt) or call (650) 372-6200.

	SAN MATEO Every Thursday, Friday, Saturday	DALY CITY	MENLO PARK	PACIFICA	REDWOOD CITY	SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO	HALF MOON BAY	EAST PALO ALTO	LA HONDA
JANUARY	except the 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup>		—	—	—	—	—	—	—
FEBRUARY	except the 1 <sup>st</sup> , 15 <sup>th</sup>	—	—	—	—	February 1 <sup>st</sup>	—	—	—
MARCH	except the 15 <sup>th</sup> , 22 <sup>nd</sup>	—	—	March 15 <sup>th</sup>	March 22 <sup>nd</sup>	—	—	—	—
APRIL	except the 12 <sup>th</sup>	April 12 <sup>th</sup>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
MAY	except the 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 17 <sup>th</sup> , 24 <sup>th</sup>	—	May 17 <sup>th</sup>	—	—	May 3 <sup>rd</sup>	—	—	—
JUNE	except the 19 <sup>th</sup> , 21 <sup>st</sup> , 28 <sup>th</sup>	—	—	June 21 <sup>st</sup>	—	—	June 28 <sup>th</sup>	—	—
JULY	except the 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	July 12 <sup>th</sup>
AUGUST	except the 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup> , 30 <sup>th</sup>	—	—	—	—	August 2 <sup>nd</sup>	—	August 16 <sup>th</sup>	—
SEPTEMBER	except the 20 <sup>th</sup>	—	—	September 20 <sup>th</sup>	—	—	—	—	—
OCTOBER	All	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
NOVEMBER	except the 1 <sup>st</sup> , 27 <sup>th</sup> , 28 <sup>th</sup> , and 29 <sup>th</sup>	—	—	—	—	November 1 <sup>st</sup>	—	—	—
DECEMBER	except the 20 <sup>th</sup> , 25 <sup>th</sup> , 26 <sup>th</sup> , and 27 <sup>th</sup>	—	—	December 20 <sup>th</sup>	—	—	—	—	—

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [SMCHEALTH.ORG/HHW-APPT](https://smchealth.org/hhw-appt) OR CALL (650) 372-6200

## PREPARING FOR YOUR FREE DROP-OFF AT AN HHW EVENT:

- Review the [program rules](#) and requirements, and the list of [items that are and are not accepted](#).
- Schedule an appointment using our [online appointment system](#), call (650) 372-6200, or email [hhw@smcgov.org](mailto:hhw@smcgov.org)
- There is a 10 gallon (or 50 pound) maximum per vehicle, per appointment, and the maximum container size is 5 gallons.
- Over 10 gallons? Make multiple appointments. **ONE APPOINTMENT PER VEHICLE.**
- [Prepare for your appointment](#) and arrive at the drop-off location on your confirmed day and time.



Scan the QR code to schedule an appointment, get notified about upcoming events, and see the full list of accepted items.

# 3 CURBSIDE PICK-UP

You may have curbside pickup options available to you! Check the list of haulers in San Mateo County for items eligible for curbside pickup. Contact your hauler for more information.

Haulers	Items Accepted
<a href="#">Republic Services of Daly City</a>	Cooking oil, Used motor oil and oil filters, Batteries and cell phones, Compact fluorescent lamps - Must be placed in clear zip-type plastic bag
<a href="#">Republic Services of Half Moon Bay</a>	Used motor oil and oil filters, Batteries and cell phones
<a href="#">Recology San Mateo County</a>	Batteries and cell phones, Apartment battery and cell phone collection bucket, Used motor oil and oil filters
<a href="#">Recology of the Coast</a>	Batteries, Apartment battery bucket collection
<a href="#">Recology San Bruno</a>	Batteries, Apartment battery bucket collection
<a href="#">South San Francisco Scavenger</a>	Cell phones, Computer monitors, Electronic items, Batteries, Used motor oil and oil filters
<a href="#">Greenwaste</a>	Used motor oil and oil filters, Batteries, Fluorescent lamps (CFL) - Must be placed in clear zip-type plastic bag
<a href="#">Kunz Valley Trash</a>	Used motor oil, Video display devices, Batteries

## APARTMENT BATTERY RECYCLING

Select apartment complexes offer orange recycling battery buckets provided by waste haulers.

Don't have one? Ask your property manager about getting one where you live.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT  
[SMCHEALTH.ORG/CURBSIDE](https://smchealth.org/curbside)  
 OR CALL (650) 372-6200



# LESS IS MORE (HEALTHY)!

## GET FREE HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS!

Many of the items collected at the County's household hazardous waste collection events are still in good condition. Some of these products include common household cleaners, auto supplies, fertilizers, wood preservatives, stains, and latex paint. The [Product Give Away Program](#) redistributes these products for free.

## LOOKING TO REDUCE HHW IN YOUR HOME?

Start with buying fewer cleaning products and choosing safer products!

- Visit [Safer Cleaning at Home](#) to explore how you can use simple ingredients like lemons, vinegar, and baking soda to safely clean almost anything in your home and protect your family from harsh chemicals.
- Get more ideas for making your home safer and healthier at our [A Healthy Home](#) and [Healthy Housing](#) web pages, [Safer Cleaning Basics](#) and [Less Toxic Spring Cleaning](#) videos.
- At the store? Shop safe by looking for the Environmental Protection Agency's [Safer Choice](#) label or use the [Clearya](#) app to scan products for alerts on toxic ingredients.
- The [Environmental Working Group](#) provides science-based guidance on reducing exposure to toxins and avoiding hazards contained in household products.
- [Women's Voices for the Earth](#) provides science-based information on cleaning product ingredients and user-friendly guides to support you in reducing chemical exposure.



### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Find out more about Household Hazardous Waste here:  
[smchealth.org/hhw](https://smchealth.org/hhw)

Make an HHW Drop-off appointment here: [smchealth.org/hhw-appt](https://smchealth.org/hhw-appt)

¡En español! [smchealth.org/hhw-appt-espanol](https://smchealth.org/hhw-appt-espanol)

If you need more information, contact Environmental Health Services at:  
(650) 372-6200 • [hhw@smcgov.org](mailto:hhw@smcgov.org)