

Paint Contractors Pollution Prevention Tip Sheet

Waste Streams Generated

Unused oil based paint
Unused latex based paint
Spent thinner
Spent solvents
Paint strippers
Hardeners, cements, epoxies, adhesives and glazes
Empty containers
Spray paint cans and other aerosols
Solvent contaminated rags/wipers
Spent sandblast media, paint chips or residue from paint removal operations containing lead, cadmium, chromium or other heavy metals

Pollution Prevention/Waste Minimization Tips

- a) To prevent having leftover paint and waste disposal problems, order enough paint for the first half or three quarters of the job and then re-estimate the job at the halfway point.
- b) Consider buying recycled latex paint and consider using these commercial grade coatings to save money and prevent old paint from being wasted.
- c) Consider donating to community or high school theaters and community fix-up projects, donations of unopened, one-gallon cans or larger quantities of light-colored latex paints. Also, with customer approval, small quantities of paint may be left at the job site as touch-up paint.
- d) Hazardous paint and thinner wastes that can not be reused, must be handled and disposed as hazardous waste. Latex paint manufactured before 1992 likely contains mercury and paint manufactured before 1978 likely contains lead. Both should be handled as hazardous waste. If you're not sure it contains mercury or lead, check the label, the material safety data sheet or test the paint.

Reduced disposal costs can be obtained when these wastes are hauled for disposal to a local household hazardous waste and conditionally exempt small quantity hazardous waste collection center.

The facility depicted below is the City of Cheyenne's household hazardous waste and conditionally exempt small quantity hazardous waste collection center.



- e) If you can't take your hazardous paint wastes to a local CESQG collection facility, conditionally exempt small quantity (CESQG) hazardous waste amounts (less than 220 pounds/month) can be dried in the can, painted on cardboard or on boards, then disposed of in a covered dumpster.
- f) Keeping aerosol can nozzle tips unclogged will help companies empty the containers and comply with hazardous waste disposal requirements. To prevent nozzles from clogging invert the can after each use and spray the nozzle to clear any residual paint or clean and replace the nozzle tip.
- g) You may be able to sewer wastewater from latex paint cleanup and waterbased cleaners. Disposal into storm sewers or septic tank systems is not permitted. Check with your local treatment plant for permission and restrictions. Very old latex paints that contain mercury-based fungicides (typically phenyl mercuric acetate) must be tested and handled as a hazardous waste and should be managed separately from other material.
- h) Blend leftover paint and reuse it. It is often possible to use leftover paints at another job site or as a primer or undercoat. Compatible light color paints can also often be mixed together for reuse.
- i) Allow the paint solids in the solvent used for brush and spray gun cleaning to settle back down into the bottom of the container. By decanting the clear solvent at the top for reuse, the paint "solids" at the bottom can be added back into the paint to thin it out. You can cut your solvent costs by using this recycled solvent for initial cleaning of dirty equipment and using only a small amount of new solvent for final cleaning.

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