

What should I do with my latex paint?

Latex paint is not hazardous waste! **First, be sure that it is latex.**

Latex paints can be identified by these words on the label - just look at the can!

- "Latex"
- "Clean with soap and water"
- "Acrylic"
- "Vinyl"
- "Water-based"

USE IT UP

Put a second coat on that closet or hallway. Before you get rid of that can, do you have any places that could use a touch up? You can also mix together small amounts of latex paint, even different colors, and use this mixture as a primer coat on jobs where your final finish isn't critical.

MAKE IT LAST

Keep paint usable for years by storing it properly. Cover the opening with plastic wrap and then make sure the lid fits securely. Storing the can upside down on the shelf creates a good seal and preserves the paint for longer. Keep paint from freezing to preserve its qualities. Still can't find a use for it? Then...

PASS IT ON

Donate paint to schools, religious groups, community groups, or theater groups. Your neighbor might need some extra paint for a small project.

DRY IT UP

Can't find anyone to take it? You can dry it out and throw it out with your regular garbage. Remove the lid and place your can of LATEX PAINT in a safe, well-ventilated area. Cans 1/4 full or less should dry in a week. Add an absorbent material such as mulch, cat litter, sand, sawdust, shredded paper, vermiculite, or plaster of Paris to speed up the drying process. Divide full cans of paint into other empty cans to reduce the total in each can, or pour 1-inch layers into a cardboard box lined with plastic. **When there is no more free-flowing latex paint, leave the lid off the container (so your trash hauler can see that it's dried paint) and throw it out with your regular garbage.**

REMEMBER...

- *Don't* throw out paint if the can says "oil-based," "alkyd," or "combustible." This is oil-based paint and should always be taken to the HHW Center whether it is solid or liquid.
- *Don't* pour latex paint down the drain. The organic chemicals in latex paint can harm the biological systems within your septic tank or sewage treatment plant.
- *Don't* dump latex paint on the ground. Although not considered hazardous waste, latex paint can still contaminate soil and water.
- *Don't* put liquid latex paint in your garbage. Free flowing liquids cannot be disposed of as trash.