

## 5.4 Household Hazardous Waste

*Keeping household hazardous waste out of the landfill helps to keep chemicals out of the landfill and reduces the risk to human health and the environment. Household hazardous waste can be reused within the community or shipped out for proper disposal.*

### What is Household Hazardous Waste?

Household hazardous waste (HHW) is generated by households and consists of household products that contain hazardous substances. Examples include lead-acid batteries, fluorescent bulbs, solvents, paints, cleaners, pesticides, etc. Since these wastes were generated by a household, they are exempt from being regulated as a hazardous waste.

The same wastes generated by businesses or the school do not qualify as HHW, and those entities are responsible for properly managing these items as hazardous wastes. Businesses and schools cannot dispose of hazardous waste in a Class III landfill.



*Sign informing disposers that this collection shed is not for contractors or large organizations.*

ADEC strongly recommends that HHW is separated out for reuse or backhaul to protect human health, the environment, and subsistence resources. Although HHW is not regulated as hazardous waste, separating HHW from the waste disposed of at the landfill will help keep chemicals out of the landfill and reduce risks to human health and the environment. HHW can be reused within the community or shipped out for proper disposal or recycling.

### Proper management of HHW:

The following will help to ensure that HHW is responsibly managed and prepared for reuse in or backhaul from the community:

- Don't accept any hazardous waste from local projects, businesses, governments or other organizations. The contractor/entity is responsible for backhauling any hazardous waste generated by the project or organization, regardless of the amount. It is the landfill permit owner's legal right to refuse to accept any waste at any time.
- If the container doesn't have a label, then manage it in accordance with the Mystery Drum section below.
- If it is not clear whether the product or ingredient is hazardous, look up the product/ingredient on the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) website or check the manufacturer's SDS (safety data sheet) for additional details

including testing for toxicity.

## Storing HHW:

The storage of HHW should comply with the following guidelines:

- Separate different types of household hazardous wastes.
- Keep the products in their original containers if possible and don't mix any products together.
- Label and date (day of receipt) all containers to the best of your knowledge.
- HHW should be stored off the ground, in containers, under cover, and out of the weather. Rain and snow melt will overflow buckets/barrels and can rust out metal containers and cause leaks.
- If a container is beginning to rust or leak, place that container into another sturdy container to catch the leaks. Be sure to label the new container.
- Make sure lids and caps are sealed tightly.
- Keep hazardous wastes away from heat, flames, sparks, or other sources of ignition.
- If items are reusable or are considered salvageable, keep them from freezing. Once frozen, many items, including paints, solvents, glues, and lead-acid batteries, are no longer usable. Freezing also has the potential to break the container open, causing leaks in the spring.
- Do not store HHW near the barge landing, river, or coastline. In the event of a flood or storm surge, the containers may be carried away.

## Reuse options:

A reuse building or area is a great way to re-purpose HHW that is still usable. Reuse allows someone else to use the material for its intended purpose, saves money on backhaul, and prevents HHW from being disposed of in the landfill. A reuse center is not an HHW collection site. All the products in a reuse center should cycle through. Items that are not used within a couple of months need to be moved to the collection center for storage and backhaul.

It is important to note that not all materials can be reused. To be reused the material must be in good usable condition, have enough material left to use, in its original container, not expired, safe to use, and must be used according to the directions on the label.



*HHW reuse center. Items are grouped by type and regularly removed if not claimed.*

A reuse center should:

- Be available to residents.
- Keep items properly separated.
- Be weatherproof.

## Backhaul:

Backhaul is necessary for any HHW that cannot be reused or that hasn't cycled through the reuse center. Some considerations for backhaul include:

- Ship HHW out of the community annually. Don't let the stockpile become larger than what you can safely manage.
- Some pesticides, lead-acid batteries, and fluorescent light bulbs can be shipped out as universal waste, which is less complicated and more cost effective.
- Some items, such as lead-acid batteries, have value and can be sold to recyclers.
- See the backhaul section of this manual for more information regarding backhaul tips and procedures.

## Helpful tips:

- Do NOT burn any HHW.
- An option for unused latex paint is to open the container and let the paint dry to a solid. Once the paint has solidified completely, the container can be disposed of in the landfill.

## Examples:



*HHW collection shed that is clean and well organized. The different collection areas are labelled, and wastes are separated.*