

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT AND PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP

Encouraging Diminished Use, Proper Disposal, and Corporate Responsibility

Residential and business use of CVSWMMD Hazardous Waste Collections remained consistent with past years' attendance, with 572 District households and 24 businesses using the five collections. The September event in Montpelier was the largest event of the season; 283 households participated.

The CVSWMMD holds hazardous waste collections to encourage the safe disposal of toxic materials. Latex paint brought to the event is recycled through the Chittenden Solid Waste District's Local Colors paint recycling and resale program. All other materials are packaged and shipped to a hazardous waste disposal landfill or incinerator by the company hired to manage this aspect of the program.

While it's certainly preferable to collect these materials for safe disposal than to have them dumped into solid waste landfills, the burden of paying for all of this waste falls mainly to municipalities. In response, there's a growing movement across Europe and the U.S. to encourage manufacturers to take responsibility for their products at "end of life," including such hazardous materials as fluorescent bulbs, e-waste, and paint products. See the *Producer Responsibility* sidebar for more information on this effort and what it offers Vermont.



PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY: PAINT AS AN EXAMPLE

In calendar year 2008, the CVSWMMD collected unwanted paint at six hazardous waste events. **We paid \$44,971.02 for paint disposal and recycling costs -- 63% of our total expense for hazardous waste -- yet collected just a small fraction of the paint that's stored in homes and is added to each year.** It's important to note that this dollar amount reflects only disposal/recycling costs, not the operational, administrative, or personnel-related expenses of running the program.

In contrast, in July 2009, the governor of Oregon signed into law the nation's first program requiring paint manufacturers to safely manage leftover latex and oil-based paint from consumer and contractor painting jobs. As a result, Oregon municipalities that currently collect leftover paint will realize a direct financial savings, and the new system will set up an industry-led program to reduce paint waste, increase reuse and recycling, and safely dispose of remaining unusable paint.

This new law ties into the wider producer responsibility movement. Producer responsibility means manufacturers internalize the end-of-life management costs of their products rather than have government set up and fund collection programs for waste products. The U.S. movement has resulted in 19 state electronics laws, seven state thermostat laws, one fluorescent lamp law, several laws on batteries and auto switches, and now one law on paint.

In Vermont, e-waste legislation has received the most attention to date. The CVSWMMD strongly supports the e-waste product stewardship bill that was discussed during the last legislative session and hopes to see it resurrected during the upcoming session. See the Vermont Product Stewardship Council for more information: www.vtpsc.org ◇

Fiscal Year 2009 Facts & Figures

- The District held **5 Hazardous Waste Collections**.
 - **572 households** and **24 businesses** took part.
- A **total of 66,002 lbs.** of mixed hazardous waste was **collected** (including paints, acids, bases, mercury, gasoline, thinners, etc.)
- Of that total, **61,522 lbs.** were collected **from households**, and **4,480 lbs.** were collected **from businesses**.

Materials Collected:

- 24,680 lbs. of oil paint and resins
 - 15,540 lbs. of latex paint
- 7,110 feet of fluorescent bulbs
 - 87 lbs. of mercury
- 3,580 lbs. of rechargeable batteries (*collected at District recycling depots and sent for recycling.*)