

Paint Handling Process

Based on the type of paint product requiring disposal, one of the following two procedures is recommended:

Latex and acrylic paints are potentially hazardous to the environment in their liquid form. In order to safely dispose of them in normal household trash, purchase paint hardener at an area paint or building supply store (such as Amherst Farmer's Supply or Cowls). Compile unwanted paint from partially full cans into a single paint can and stir in the powder as directed. Allow to completely harden in a well-ventilated area (do not cover) and place the paint can in the trash. Alert your trash hauler that the paint in the can is no longer in liquid form as paint cans are red flags for waste collection employees. If you bring dried-out paint to the transfer station, leave the lids off so attendants may verify that the paint is completely dry. Several scoops of kitty litter may be used as an alternative to the hardener, but the drying process will take much longer.

All other forms of paint and paint products (including those formerly collected in the transfer station's summer paint program) may now be taken to the Town's annual hazardous household waste collection in late September (exact date to be determined). This includes: oil paint, paint in aerosol cans, paint thinner, linseed oil, turpentine, and wood stains and preservatives.

It is estimated that the United States generates 70 million gallons of leftover paint annually. Paint manufacturers in other states such as Oregon and California have taken financial responsibility for the safe disposal of unused paint. Until the Commonwealth has a similar arrangement, the Amherst DPW will continue to seek the most cost-effective paint disposal solution that allows for the safety of employees and the environment.

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