

4 Going Green

OUR JOURNEY HAS JUST BEGUN

E-Mission News From the Banks Hardwoods Environmental Committee • Spring 2009



Hazardous Household Products

Did you know that many useful household products are hazardous if not disposed of properly? The good news is there are recycling centers for many of these products, and if there isn't one near you, many cities have a Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) disposal site. Here are a few common household items and how they can be recycled.

The website www.earth911.com allows you to type in the kind of product you need to get rid of and your ZIP code, then lists drop-off locations in your area.



Rechargeable and single-use batteries - Batteries contain lead, nickel and mercury, all of which can damage the environment when thrown away. Rechargeable batteries are one of the easiest items to recycle because major electronics stores, such as Radio Shack and Best Buy, will recycle your batteries for you at no cost.

Cleaning products - Most antibacterial cleaners, air fresheners, dishwasher detergent, oven and bathroom cleaners contain toxic ingredients that can seep into groundwater. To minimize these effects, dispose of the unused products at your local HHW site. An easier solution may be to buy or make your own greener cleaners. Regular soap is just 0.2 percent less effective than antibiotic soap in killing germs and better for the environment.

Medications - Prescriptions and over-the-counter medication can expire, but it's bad to throw them out or flush them, because they can contaminate water supplies and harm wildlife. In 2008, an investigation found low levels of over-the-counter drugs and pharmaceuticals in drinking water supplies of several major cities. Some pharmacies will take back expired drugs; otherwise take them to the HHW site.

Paint & paint thinner - In many states it is illegal to throw away paint or paint thinner, which leak at the dump and contaminate water supplies. You can dispose of your old paint and thinner at a HHW site. If the paint is still good, it can be taken to a paint store and remixed or donated to Habitat for Humanity.

Pesticides - It is illegal to pour pesticides down the drain; doing so could kill fish and other wildlife. It's estimated that 90 percent of U.S. homes use pesticides. Weed killer, bug spray and even flea collars should not be thrown away. All pesticides have the proper disposal instructions on the label and are accepted at HHW sites.

Disposing of your household hazardous waste in an eco-friendly manner is relatively simple and easy, so take the time to do it right.

"No one can do everything, but everyone can do something."

E-Mission Statement

"As we strive to produce the highest quality lumber and provide the very best service to our customers, we will do everything within our means to do so in an environmentally friendly manner."

CFL Recycle in White Pigeon

For those in the White Pigeon area, Midwest Energy Cooperative has started a free recycling program for your Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFL). Just bring your unbroken, burned-out CFL to any one of their district service centers and they will take it from there.

Have a Suggestion?

Please send suggestions to regina@bankshardwoods.com.