



Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department
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www.lincoln.ne.gov Keyword: household



PAINT MANAGEMENT

HOW TO SAFELY USE, STORE, RECYCLE, AND DISPOSE OF PAINT

KINDS OF PAINT	LATEX PAINT	OIL-BASED PAINT
ALSO KNOWN AS	Vinyl, Acrylic, Water-based	Alkyd, Polyurethane, Varnish
BEST WAY TO MANAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use it safely! • Use it up or pass it on! • Clean it safely! • Store it safely! • Dry it out! Place completely solidified latex paint in household trash. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use it safely! • Use it up or pass it on! • Clean it safely! • Store it safely! • Take leftovers to a Household Hazardous Waste Collection.
CLEAN UP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean with soap and water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean with paint thinner

Use it safely!

Latex paint is safer to use, clean up, and dispose of than oil-based paint. For any paint, you should:

- o Read and follow the label directions.
- o Use in a well-ventilated space.
- o Keep children and pets away from the area.
- o Wear gloves; the use of goggles or other eye protection is advised.
- o Avoid contact with skin; wash or wipe up immediately.
- o Never use exterior paint indoors, and never use industrial paints for residential purposes.



Solvents in paint are flammable; contents can be toxic when breathed or touched. People with weak immune systems or lungs might experience discomfort when exposed to fumes. They should leave the area or take other precautions.

Use it up or pass it on!

- o Avoid waste, and buy only what you need. You will save money by calculating the right quantity of paint for the job. Ask the retailer for help or use an online paint calculator.
- o Small amounts of paint can be mixed with other colors and used as primer coat or on jobs where the final finish is not critical.
- o Donate unopened cans of paint. Some schools, community or religious organizations, or theater groups will accept unopened cans.
- o Unwanted oil-based paints can be brought to any HHW Collection. Usable latex paint – ½ gallon or more – should be brought to a Latex Paint Exchange on May 17 or September 20, 2008.

Clean it Safely!

Latex paint:

- Paint trays and brushes should be wiped clean with a paper towel or rag (air-dry before placing in trash).
- Trays and brushes can be cleaned in a sink with soap and water, using an ample quantity of water to dilute the paint thoroughly.
- Do not clean equipment outside on the ground; it will pollute local streams, lakes, and ground water.

Oil-based paint:

- Use an approved paint solvent such as thinner or turpentine. Clean brushes and equipment in a well-ventilated area far away from sparks, flames, or high heat.
- Recycling paint thinner: Pour used turpentine, paint thinner, or brush cleaner into a clear container with a tight-fitting lid; label the container, store in a safe place, and allow paint particles to settle (this may take several weeks). Pour the clear liquid into a container with a child-proof lid. Let the residue dry completely in a well-ventilated area and discard in the trash.

Store it Safely!

- Before closing cans, clean the top carefully, stretch a piece of plastic wrap over the opening, seal firmly, and store in a dry, cool (35°-75° F.) place away from flames or sparks.
- Leftover paint can be re-used: 1) if it has not been repeatedly frozen and thawed, 2) if it is in the original can with the label intact, 3) if it mixes when stirred; and 4) if lumps do not appear when it is painted onto a sheet of newspaper.

Dry it out! (Latex paint only)

- Do NOT pour liquid paint down the drain, on the ground, or in the trash. This may contaminate ground and surface water supplies.
- Remove the lid; place in a safe, ventilated area out of the rain. Cans ¼ full or less will dry in a few days. Larger amounts of latex paint can be combined with mulch, cat litter, or paint hardener from the hardware store and spread to dry in a plastic-lined tray or box. Place dry paint and empty cans (with lids off) in the trash for regular collection.
- Oil-based paints and products such as wood preservatives and roofing tars **should not** be disposed of in the trash. Bring these products to a Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection for proper disposal.

Contact the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department at 441-8021 for a Household Hazardous Waste Collection schedule and Usable Latex Paint Exchange information.