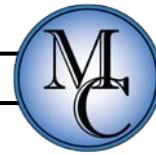




CITY OF MISSOULA

MISSOULA COUNTY



September 14, 2015

Contact: Peter Nielsen, Environmental Health Supervisor or
Michelle Hutchins, Environmental Health Specialist – 258-4890

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Missoula Valley Water Quality District along with the City of Missoula Public Works and Fire Departments and Republic Services will hold the 23rd Annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection, ***Haz Waste Days***, on **Sept. 18 & 19** at the **Scott Street City Shops** at the intersection of Scott and Turner streets. Hours for the collection are 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 18, and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 19.

Get rid of unneeded or unusable hazardous chemical products such as pesticides, poisons, oil-based paints and solvents. Missoula County residents may drop off many unwanted hazardous materials for no charge, including oil-based paints and stains, paint thinner, degreasers, fertilizer, pesticides no longer registered for use by EPA, and rechargeable household batteries (alkaline batteries can be disposed of in trash). Old fuel, motor oil and antifreeze will also be accepted free of charge at the event – up to 15 gallons in no- return containers (Courtesy of Republic Services). Up to six fluorescent **tubes** (not compact fluorescent bulbs – year-round, free options are available for bulbs) will be accepted from Missoula County households free of charge at this year's event. Items accepted for a nominal fee include pesticides, caustics, strong acids and chlorinated solvents. The fee covers approximately one-fourth of our costs for shipping and disposing of the waste. **Businesses and out-of-county residents will be charged our costs for disposal of all waste.**

A mercury thermometer exchange will allow people to bring in their old mercury fever thermometers for disposal and receive a free digital fever thermometer in exchange.

Mercury is a toxic substance that can pollute air and water. A broken mercury thermometer can create hazardous levels of mercury vapor in confined spaces indoors and can contaminate air, water, fish and wildlife when disposed of improperly! Fossil fuel power plants are the largest overall source of mercury pollution to our environment, but household mercury can impact the environment as well.

The Water Quality District encourages folks to consider donating useable products to someone

who can use them up. This eliminates the need for disposing of the item and reduces the manufacture of additional product.

If you only have used motor oil to dispose of, avoid saving it up all year and waiting in line at Haz Waste Days by using the available year-round options! Republic Services accepts up to 2 gallons per week in clear plastic containers. Put it out with your trash, or if you are on an automated pick-up route, take it to the Republic office at 1501 Rodgers St. Some auto parts stores or auto shops will also accept used motor oil for free. Visit our website for a list.

There are some things that are **NOT accepted** at Haz Waste Days:

Latex paint is **NOT accepted**, because it is not considered a hazardous waste and can be dried out and discarded with regular trash (with lid off). Mixing in kitty litter will speed the drying process. Car batteries can be recycled throughout the year at Republic Recycling, and car battery retailers. **Ace Hardware, Home Depot** and **Lowes** accept **compact fluorescent bulbs** from residences for **free**; PETES Palmer Electric accepts CFLs, tubes and ballasts, throughout the year for **a charge**. Most **consumer electronics** can be taken to **Best Buy** or **Staples** for recycling and most items are **free of charge**.

Contact them for details. P.E.T.E.S. Palmer Electric at 2407 Harve Avenue (during business hours only) and Republic Recycling (during business hours only) accept most consumer electronics for a charge throughout the year.

We also do not accept dried out cans of paint, empty aerosol cans (both can be thrown away), asbestos (contact Republic Services), radioactive wastes, explosives, latex paint (can be dried out and thrown away), and household products intended to be poured down the drain, such as drain cleaners.

Manufacture and disposal of hazardous waste impacts our environment. The *best* way to protect our environment and health is to create less of the product! PLEASE HELP REDUCE HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE BY FOLLOWING THESE TIPS:

- 1) Buy only what you need and use it up!** Disposing of toxic products often costs more than buying them in the first place; so please don't assume that you can simply buy whatever you want and bring your leftovers to us!
- 2) Give your useable leftovers to someone who can use them safely.**
- 3) Always use the least-toxic product available.** Whenever possible, use latex or water based paints and stains, which are less toxic than oil-based products. The County Extension Office has information that can help you use less-toxic

alternatives to achieve even better results for your lawn and garden. Contact the County Extension Office Plant Clinic (258-4213) or visit missoulaeduplace.org for more information.

Local health and fire agencies urge people to clear out unneeded *flammable liquids* such as oil-based paints, paint thinners, fuels, waste oil and solvents. These flammable products can be easily ignited and quickly accelerate a fire. They also pose a threat to the health of firefighters and neighbors when they are burned.

For more information on how to be a smart consumer and reduce your use of toxic products, log on to our website: **www.co.missoula.mt.us/wq**.

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