How to reduce, reuse, and recycle common household items, and dispose of household hazardous materials.

For towns in the **Southern Berkshire Regional Household Hazardous Waste Program**
(Alford, Becket, Egremont, Great Barrington, Lee, Lenox, Monterey, Mount Washington, New Marlborough, Otis, Richmond, Sheffield, Stockbridge, Tyringham and West Stockbridge)

Printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper

Dear Resident,

Does your basement or garage have a box full of household chemicals that you aren't sure what to do with? Have you ever wondered how to get rid of an old television in a way that's safe for the environment? Do you have an old mercury thermometer that you don't know how to dispose of safely?

This guide contains information about proper disposal and recycling of common household items that shouldn't be thrown in the trash. Some of the items in this guide are considered **hazardous waste**. Hazardous waste is waste that can catch fire, react, or explode, or that is toxic or corrosive. If you throw hazardous waste in the trash, it can be dangerous for the workers who pick up your garbage or work at your transfer station. Hazardous chemicals can end up in our water or air when trash is incinerated or if a landfill leaks. If you pour hazardous waste down the drain, it can contaminate your septic system, well or the wastewater treatment plant.

Other items discussed in this guide aren't hazardous, but still shouldn't be thrown out. Some items can be brought to your transfer station, while others need to be brought to a regional household hazardous waste (HHW) collection (page 11). Still others are accepted by area businesses. Many items can be recycled and enjoy a second life instead of ending up in a landfill or incinerator.

In many cases, alternative products that are safer for you - and the environment - exist. This guide mentions some alternatives, and gives suggestions for obtaining further information.

This guide was printed by the South Berkshire Regional Household Hazardous Waste Collaborative and updated in 2015 by the Center for EcoTechnology. The information in this booklet was the best available in 2015. Please call businesses, town halls, and other locations to confirm hours and fees.

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Appliances

Appliances that contain CFCs (refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners, and dehumidifiers):

Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) damage the ozone layer when they are released into the environment. Special care must be taken in removing them from appliances.

- **Sayers Auto Wrecking** (443-1635) in Lanesborough accepts appliances that contain CFCs. No charge
- **Sears** (644-9691) in Great Barrington will remove CFCs ($40 fee) or will accept an old appliance for a fee with purchase of a new appliance.

- **CFC appliances will be accepted at transfer stations (fee may apply) in Becket, Lenox Valley WTF (private-Lenoxdale), West Stockbridge, Monterey, (Egremont and Sheffield with CFC removal tag)**

Appliances that do not contain CFCs (microwaves, washing machines, stoves, dryers, etc.):

These appliances can be recycled as scrap metal.

- **Perlman & Sons** (54 South Merriam St., Pittsfield, (442-7127) accepts appliances without CFCs.
- **George Apkin & Sons Inc** (80 State St., North Adams (664-4936) accepts white goods and light steel (no microwaves).

- **Non-CFC appliances will be accepted at the following transfer stations (fee may apply): Becket, Egremont, Great Barrington, Monterey, New Marlborough, Otis, Sheffield (no fee), Stockbridge, and West Stockbridge. Lenox Valley WTF (private-Lenoxdale)**

- **Richmond residents can drop off bulky items and white goods at the town garage.**

Automotive Products

Car Batteries

- **Formel Motor Company** (21 Van Deusenville Road, Great Barrington, 528-9424) accepts car batteries free of charge. Please call to confirm.
- **Perlman & Sons** (54 South Merriam St., Pittsfield, 442-7127) accepts car batteries and pays market rate. Please call to confirm.
- **Accepted at the following transfer stations: Monterey, Otis**

Tires

Most tire dealerships recycle your old tires when you purchase new ones. Taking advantage of this service is the easiest way to dispose of old tires. Even if you aren't purchasing new tires, many tire dealerships and some garages will accept your old tires for a fee.

- **Accepted at the following transfer stations (fee may apply): Becket, Great Barrington, Monterey, New Marlborough, Otis and Stockbridge**

Motor Oil

DO NOT mix with gasoline, antifreeze, or cleaning solvents, or the motor oil may not be recyclable.
By law, any business that sells motor oil in Massachusetts is required to accept it back for recycling. Most places require a receipt, so be sure to save it.
Some area businesses that change oil will accept small amounts of used motor oil for recycling. Check with your local garage.

- **Jiffy Lube** (448-2400) accepts up to 6 quarts of used motor oil.
- Bring used motor oil to a regional paint and oil collection (p. 11)
- **Accepted at the following transfer stations: Great Barrington, Monterey, Otis and Stockbridge**

Other automotive fluids (antifreeze, transmission fluid, etc.):

DO NOT mix with oil, gasoline or any other chemicals, or the fluid may not be recyclable.

- Bring to a regional comprehensive HHW collection (p. 11)

Electronics

Televisions, Computers, and Computer Monitors:
The average Cathode Ray Tube (CRT) contains between five and eight pounds of lead encased in the glass screen. CRTs (which are part of televisions and computer monitors) are banned from landfills and incinerators to prevent the release of hazardous chemicals, like lead, into the environment. The heavy metals in computers and televisions have been linked to certain cancers, as well as nervous system, reproductive, and developmental problems.
Computers also contain metals that can be recycled.

- **Goodwill Industries of the Berkshires** accepts televisions, computers, and computer monitors for recycling. Call for pricing; 442-0061.
- **Best Buy (Berkshire Mall)** accepts all electronics. www.bestbuy.com or contact your local store for more information.
- Televisions and computers may be accepted at some regional comprehensive HHW collections (p. 11)
- **Accepted at the following transfer stations (fee may apply): Becket, Egremont, Great Barrington, Monterey, New Marlborough, Otis, Sheffield (no fee), Stockbridge, Lenox Valley WTF(Fee charged, private, Lenoxdale).**

Cell phones:
Cell phones contain lead, arsenic, cadmium, and other toxins which can be released into the air and water if cell phones are thrown in the trash. These substances can be harmful to human health and the environment.

- Best Buy, Staples, Radio Shack, and the **Center for EcoTechnology** in Pittsfield accept cell phones for recycling at no charge.
- **Cell phones are accepted for recycling at the following locations: The Town Halls of Alford, Becket, Egremont, Lenox, Monterey, Mount Washington, Otis, Tri Town Health Department in Lee and the Sheffield Transfer Station.**

Items that contain mercury

Mercury is a neurotoxin that is found in some common household items. When items that contain mercury are thrown in the trash, the mercury enters our air and water. It accumulates as it travels up the food chain, and fish which contain mercury can be harmful, especially to children and pregnant women. One way to keep mercury out of the environment is to properly dispose of items that contain mercury.

Fluorescent Bulbs (tube and compact):
- Store bulbs in a box or fiber drum to prevent breakage
- Bring to a regional comprehensive HHW collection (p. 11)
- **Accepted at the following transfer stations (fee may apply): Becket, Egremont, Great Barrington, Monterey (no fee), Otis (no fee), Sheffield (no fee), Stockbridge (no fee), West Stockbridge (no fee). Also accepted at the Richmond Town Hall and Home Depot (cfl only, no fee), Carr Hardware (both)**

Thermostats:
Dial thermostats (not digital thermostats) often contain mercury

- Accepted for recycling at **Berkshire County Plumbing Supply** (Stockbridge Road, Great Barrington. Location search: http://www.thermostat-recycle.org/zipsearch
- Bring to a regional comprehensive HHW collection (p. 11)
- Accepted at the following transfer stations: Sheffield, Egremont, Otis

Thermometers:
- Bring to a regional comprehensive HHW collection (p. 11)
- **Accepted at Tri Town Health in Lee** and Otis T-station

Batteries:
Rechargeable batteries contain heavy metals.
- **Accepted for recycling:** Staples in GB/Pittsfield, CET, Best Buy in Pittsfield.
- Bring rechargeable and button batteries to a regional comprehensive HHW collection (p. 11)
- Accepted at the following transfer stations: Otis

Paints, Stains and Thinners

Oil-Based Paint

Oil-based paint is a hazardous material. Choose latex paint instead of oil-based paint whenever possible. If you do purchase oil-based paint, choose the smallest possible container in order to avoid leftovers. Offer leftover paint to friends and relatives or list on freecycle.org.

- Bring oil-based paint to a regional paint and oil collection (p. 11)
- **Accepted at the Great Barrington transfer station**

Latex Paint

Latex paint is not a hazardous material.

- Give usable, leftover paint to friends/relatives or list on freecycle.org, craigslist.org free section. Habitat Restore in Pittsfield as long as it is 1/2 gallon or more per container. Call: 442-3181
- Unusable: Leave the lid off and let the paint dry to a completely solid state before putting it in the trash. Mix in kitty litter and/or sand and it will help speed the process.

Household Cleaners

Many household cleaners contain flammable or toxic ingredients, and other ingredients that are harmful to the environment, such as phosphates and chlorine.

- *Signal words* on product labels tell you how toxic a product is. Products labeled *Danger* or *Poison* are the most toxic. Those labeled *Warning* or *Caution* are of medium toxicity. Products that don't have any signal words on the label are not considered hazardous by the federal government. They may still contain hazardous chemical ingredients, but the amounts are considered too small to be of concern.
- Less toxic and environmentally friendly household cleaners are available. Choose products **without** the signal words *Danger*, *Poison*, *Warning* or *Caution*. Look for products that do not contain phosphates or chlorine. Products labeled *Safe for Septic* are also less toxic.
- You can make your own non-toxic cleaning products from baking soda and vinegar. Call CET at 1-800-238-1221 for more information on non-toxic cleaning product recipes.
- Bring any products that are flammable or toxic to a regional comprehensive HHW collection (p. 11). Check the label of the product for the words *flammable*, *poison*, or *danger*.

Pesticides/Herbicides

Chemical pesticides include weed killers, insect killers, insect repellant, flea and tick repellants and collars, and rodent killers. Pesticides have been linked to cancers and development problems. Pesticides can also harm songbirds, bees, butterflies, and other beneficial insects.

- For more information on less toxic lawns and gardens, contact CET at 1-800-238-1221 ext. 14.
- Pesticides are hazardous waste and should never be thrown out in the trash or flushed down the toilet.
- Bring these items to a regional comprehensive HHW collection (p. 11)

Medical Waste

Unwanted Medications and Prescription Drugs:

- *Do not flush down toilet or put down the drain! Email or call CET for more specific information about proper disposal of unwanted medications.*

Sharps:

- Accepted at Berkshire Medical Center and Town of Egremont (Residents only)

Safer Alternatives to Toxic Products

The following is a list of safer substitutes for some household toxics. Generally these products can be purchased in any grocery store.

ANT CONTROL:

- Sprinkle cream of tartar in front of the ant's path. Ants will not cross over it!
- Caulk and seal openings in walls
- Clean up spills
- Store food in airtight containers

BUG SPRAY:

- Place screens on windows and doors. Cover baby carriages and playpens with mosquito netting.
- Brewer's yeast tablets taken daily give skin a scent that mosquitoes seem to avoid

CHEMICAL FERTILIZERS:

- Use compost, compost tea and organic fertilizers.

COPPER CLEANER:
• Pour vinegar and salt over copper and rub

DEODORIZERS & AIR FRESHENERS:
• Open windows or use exhaust fans
• A small dish of white vinegar can get rid of kitchen odors
• An open box of baking soda placed in the refrigerator reduces odors
• Fresh cut flowers or dried flower petals and spices can add scent to a room; boiling potpourri or cinnamon and cloves in water will also produce a nice aroma!

DETERGENTS (laundry & dishwashing):
• Replace detergents with soaps that are *less toxic* and *biodegradable*. To wash out residues from detergents, pre-wash in washing soda*. **Avoid phosphates.**

DRAIN OPENERS:
• To prevent clogs, put 1/2 cup baking soda and 1/2 cup white vinegar down the drain. Wait 15 minutes, then pour boiling water down the drain.
• Use plumber's helper (plunger) or a plumber's snake

FLEA & TICK PRODUCTS:
• Put brewer's yeast or garlic in your pet's food
• Sprinkle fennel, rue, rosemary, or eucalyptus seeds and leaves around the area where animal sleeps

FLOOR CLEANERS:
• Use soap and water
• Use washing soda and water
• Use white vinegar and water

FURNITURE POLISH:
• Mix 1 teaspoon of lemon juice in 1 pint of mineral or vegetable oil

ALL PURPOSE CLEANSERS:
• Mix 1/4 cup white vinegar in 1 quart water, add lemon juice for scent. Put mixture in a spray bottle. Label the bottle.
• Mix three tablespoons washing soda in one quart of warm water
• Use baking soda with a small amount of water

GLASS AND WINDOW CLEANERS:
• Use cornstarch and water
• Mix one-half cup of white vinegar and one quart warm water; wipe with newspaper
• Use lemon juice and dry with a soft cloth

MOTH BALLS:
• Use cedar chips, lavender flowers, rosemary, mint, or white peppercorns

**Washing soda – crystalline sodium carbonate*

OVEN CLEANERS:
• Mix three tablespoons of washing soda with one quart of warm water
• Place liners in oven to catch drips during baking
• Sprinkle salt on spills while the spill is warm and then scrub
• Clean spills using steel wool and baking soda

OUTDOOR PESTICIDES:
• Plant varieties that are pest and disease resistant
• Physically remove some pests, like Japanese beetles, cabbage moth worms, and tent caterpillars
• Promote plant health by testing for pH and nutrient levels in soil. Water, prune, use compost and mulch properly.

RAT POISON:
• Put a screen over drains
• Use mechanical snap traps for mice and rats

RUG DEODORIZER:
• Deodorize dry carpets by sprinkling liberally with baking soda. Wait at least 15 minutes and vacuum. Repeat if necessary.

SCOURING POWDER:
• Dip a damp cloth in baking soda and rub
• Use steel wool

SILVER POLISH:
• Boil 2 to 3 inches of water in a shallow pan with 1 teaspoon of salt, 1 teaspoon of baking soda, and a sheet of aluminum foil. Totally submerge silver and boil for 2 to 3 more minutes. Wipe away tarnish. Repeat if necessary. *Do not use this method on antique silver.*
• Use non-abrasive toothpaste

SNAIL & SLUG BAIT:
• Place a shallow pan with beer in the infested area. Slugs are attracted to the smell and drown in the beer. To be effective, the beer must be changed every day or two.
• Overturn clay pots; snails take shelter in them during sunny days and thus can be collected and removed.

For more information on your town's transfer station, including hours of operation, fees and necessary permits, contact your town hall:

Alford	528-4536
Becket	623-8934
Egremont	528-0182
Great Barrington	528-3140
Monterey	528-1443
Mt. Washington	528-2839
New Marlborough	229-8116
Otis	269-0101
Sheffield	229-7000
Stockbridge	298-4170
Tyringham	243-1749
West Stockbridge	232-0302

The following towns do not have transfer stations:

Lee	243-5501	
Lenox	637-5500	
Richmond	698-3355	*town funded curb-side pick-up*

For more information about this booklet, or about regional household hazardous waste collection days for your community:

- Contact one of the steering committee members listed on the inside of the front cover
- Call CET at 1-800-238-1221 ext. 14
- Visit www.cetonline.org

CENTER FOR ECOTECHNOLOGY

The Center for EcoTechnology (CET), *a non-profit community based environmental organization, demonstrates and promotes practical, affordable solutions to the environmental challenges encountered in our daily activities, focusing on waste, energy and resource conservation.*

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Days

There are two different types of household hazardous waste collection days sponsored by the Southern Berkshire Regional Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program.

Paint and Oil Collections

Acceptable materials: Used motor oil, oil-based paint, oil-based stain, and oil-based paint related products (such as paint remover and stripper.) Latex paint and empty paint cans are not accepted. Dried latex paint can be thrown in the trash. Give away usable latex paint through www.freecycle.org or other.
Locations: Rotate between two towns: Great Barrington and Lenox.
Dates and Times: Visit http://www.cetonline.org/events/ for the current schedule. Or, call CET at 1-800-238-1221 ext. 14. These collections occur seven times per year in spring, summer and fall.

Comprehensive Collections

Acceptable materials include: oil-based paints, stains, varnishes, wood preservatives, paint strippers/thinners, solvent adhesives, lighter fluid, fuels/gasoline/kerosene, antifreeze, degreasers, driveway sealer, brake fluid/carburetor cleaner, transmission fluid, car wax, polishes, roofing tar, pool chemicals, poisons, insecticides, fungicides, fertilizers, weed killers, moth balls, flea control products, rubber cement, airplane glue, fiberglass resins, photo chemicals, chemistry sets, floor and metal polish, oven cleaner, drain and toilet cleaner, spot remover, rug and upholstery cleaner, hobby/artist supplies, mercury thermometers, thermostats, button batteries, rechargeable batteries, fluorescent bulbs. Televisions and computers may be accepted for a fee.
Locations: Rotate between three towns: Great Barrington, Stockbridge and Lee
Dates and Times: http://www.cetonline.org/events/, Email cet@cetonline.org or call CET at 1-800-238-1221 ext. 14.
These collections occur twice per year in summer and fall.

Additional items may be accepted at future collections. Call a steering committee member (see the inside front cover), CET at 1-800-238-1221 or visit the Events page on www.cetonline.org for an updated list of acceptable materials and a current schedule of collections.