

MANAGING YOUR WASTE

It's inevitable; we all end up with hazardous products in our home. The good news is that these products can be managed safely and responsibly.

Product Storage

- Store in a place safe from children; pay special attention to the kitchen, where kids may look for food.
- Keep in the original, labeled container. If it is placed in a different container, clearly label it with the name and active ingredients of the product. Unknown wastes pose the greatest possible hazard.
- Keep from freezing. Many products (especially if water-based) are permanently ruined by freezing.
- Store metal containers in a dry place to prevent corrosion.
- Keep flammable products from heat and flame.

Waste Reduction

While the proper disposal of HHW is important, it is costly. The cost to Crow Wing County taxpayers to dispose of some types of waste is more than the original purchase price. Improper disposal, however, costs us all a great deal more, not only in terms of monetary expense, but in quality of life as well. By reducing the amount of waste you produce, you can reduce taxpayer costs while reducing your own expenses.

- Avoid buying products that are hazardous.
- Use up existing products before buying more.
- Purchase only the quantity you need to avoid having to store hazardous waste in your home.
- Store hazardous products properly.
- Try to use up leftovers, or give them to someone who can -- empty containers are not hazardous.

Disposing of HHW Responsibly

Household hazardous waste must be disposed of properly to protect the environment. HHW placed in the trash can contaminate landfills, causing water pollution and expensive cleanup. Likewise, HHW dumped on the ground can contaminate ground and surface waters. The soil doesn't "magically" filter hazardous chemicals away. Waste poured in storm drains goes directly to our lakes and rivers. Wastewater treatment plants and septic systems are not designed to process hazardous waste, so HHW shouldn't be put down the drain. Fortunately, proper disposal is not difficult. Please follow the guidelines below - for the environment, for yourself, and for your family.

Not all household products are considered hazardous. The following items are examples of items that may be thrown away or poured down the drain if no longer useable:

- Empty containers
- Empty aerosol cans
- Detergents
- Glass Cleaner
- Bleach
- Dried-out Paint
- Food Products
- Alkaline Batteries
- Fertilizer (without weed killer)
- Soap