

Keeping Toxics Out of the Landfill



CVSWMD Collections Encourage Proper Disposal of Hazardous Waste

Paints, fluorescent bulbs, common cleaning products, rechargeable batteries—many useful products are actually hazardous to human and environmental health either during use, when it's time to dispose of them, or both. For instance, using rechargeable batteries can reduce waste since they can be charged over and over again. But the metals they contain (i.e., cadmium in NiCad batteries) which make them rechargeable are also toxic; this means that rechargeable batteries shouldn't be thrown in the trash when their useful life is through. Fluorescent bulbs fit into this same category: using them saves a lot of energy, but they contain mercury and need to be disposed of properly.

While it's fairly easy to explain how some products are hazardous, getting that information out to the 60,000 District residents and keeping hazardous products out of the landfill is no small feat.



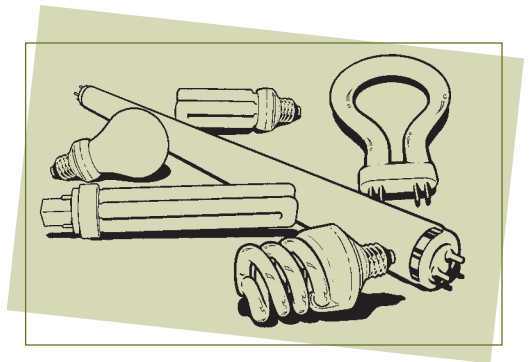
NOTE: The CVSWMD Hazardous Waste Collections are held from spring through fall. As such, program information is reported on a calendar-year basis.

CVSWMD Hazardous Waste Collections

To help, the CVSWMD holds Household Hazardous Waste Collections each year, and in fiscal year 2007 six collections were held in five member communities: Barre Town, Bradford, Hardwick, Montpelier, and Tunbridge. (See the Calendar Year 2007 Facts & Figures box for details about the types and quantities of products collected.) Collections are advertised in the newspapers, on the radio, on cable TV calendar listings, on our Web site, and at CVSWMD Recycling Depots.

In fiscal year 2007, three non-District member towns (Corinth, Fairlee, and Newbury) contracted with the District to access our hazardous waste collections. These contracts not only broaden the reach of the program but also help to cover program costs for District member towns.

Notable this year was the reduction in the number of fluorescent bulbs brought to the hazardous waste collections. Just 3,604 feet of fluorescent bulbs were collected this year vs. the 9,782 feet collected last year. This reduction is likely attributable to the growing number of businesses that will accept fluorescent bulbs for recycling year-round—which is a step in the right direction!



Encouraging Manufacturer Responsibility

Although the District will continue to hold hazardous waste collections, it's critical that manufacturers begin to take responsibility for the proper management of the toxic products they produce. Without manufacturer responsibility for end-of-life product issues, also called Extended Producer Responsibility, the manufacturer makes all of the profit while the public foots the disposal bill.

In response, the District staff has been working hard to direct residents to free recycling options for hazardous wastes as they become available. In fiscal year 2007, we continued to offer free rechargeable battery recycling at District Recycling Depots and the District office, and started collecting mercury thermostats at the depots as part of a manufacturer-sponsored take-back program. We've also actively distributed information (via fliers and on the Web) about year-round options for recycling fluorescent bulbs and about the area pharmacies participating in the statewide button-cell battery take-back program. The environmental community is continuing to encourage Extended Producer Responsibility and the District will direct residents to new take-back programs as they become available.

Fiscal Year 2007 Facts & Figures

Additional hazardous waste collected included:

- 13.74 tons** of mixed paint
- 451.76 pounds** of rechargeable batteries and cell phones
- 4,640 pounds** of lead acid batteries
- 521 pounds** of NiCad batteries
- 3,605 feet** of fluorescent bulbs

7.26 tons of latex paint was collected at CVSWMD Hazardous Waste Collections and sent for recycling.

CVSWMD held **6 Hazardous Waste Collections** throughout the District: one each in Barre Town, Tunbridge, Hardwick, and Montpelier, and two in Bradford.

563 households and 22 businesses participated in Hazardous Waste Collections, bringing **13.22 tons of general hazardous waste** to the collections.