



Recycling and Hazardous Household Waste Management

Most communities in Michigan offer ways to dispose of and recycle waste products from our homes. Recycling and safe disposal of harmful household products can help protect human health and the environment by:

- Reducing water pollution
- Reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions
- Reducing poison-related injuries
- Reducing the need for landfills
- Reducing the harm done to wildlife
- Reducing the damage to forests, rivers, lakes, and wetlands



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!

We can help protect our natural resources and reduce the amount of waste produced by following the three **R's**: **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**.

- Reduce the amount of products that you use
- Reuse products instead of throwing them away
- Recycle waste products

Start some new habits! Buy only the amount of a product that you need rather than the "economy" size. Donate unused paint to a non-profit agency. Save energy by using compact fluorescent light bulbs instead of standard light bulbs. Look for good, used items at [Freecycle's](#) website. Reuse and recycle products like plastic grocery bags. Recycle items like batteries, electronics, plastic, and paper. You can find the amount of energy that you'll save using a [tool](#) from the Environmental Protection Agency.

Recycling is easy and takes a small amount of time. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality has a lot of information for you about [recycling](#), including the [benefits](#) of recycling.

Find the [list of hazardous household waste and recycling centers](#) in Michigan or visit [Earth 911](#).



Michigan recycling reduces

- energy use by 40 billion BTUs
- greenhouse gas emissions by 1.4 million tons
- air emissions by 2.2 million tons
- waste discharged into lakes and rivers by 8,000 tons

per year!

Source: Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment

Hazardous Household Waste

Taking your hazardous household waste to a waste center helps keep dangerous chemicals out of the air that we breathe and the water that we use for our daily activities. Taking these products to a center also removes dangerous chemicals from our households where many accidental poisonings happen. Some examples of harmful household waste are cleaning products, pesticides (products that kill bugs), paint, and mercury thermometers.

Check the [list of household hazardous waste and recycling centers](#) in Michigan or visit [Earth 911](#) to find out where you can take household waste. There are also [sites](#) that take pesticides and mercury,

Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drug Waste

Many people getting rid of prescription and over-the-counter medications, vitamins and supplements by flushing them down the toilet or pouring them down the drain. Flushing them can cause pollution in our waterways. The chemicals found in these products have been shown to cause harm to the fish and wildlife living in and near rivers and lakes. People can be exposed to these chemicals when we drink water that's drawn from these bodies of water or eat some types of wild game. To find out how to get rid of these products, read the [fact sheet](#) on proper disposal.

Personal Medical Waste



Nearly 600,000 adults in Michigan, age 18 and over, have diabetes.* Diabetics use "sharps" - syringes, lancelets and needles - as part of their medical treatment. Other people with certain health conditions also use sharps as part of their treatment. If they are not safely disposed of, sharps can:

- Injure waste haulers, children and animals
- Increase the risk of infection
- Pollute the environment

Never place loose sharps in your trash! Learn how to [safely get rid of them](#) and find the [locations](#) that accept them.

*Source: Michigan Department of Community Health Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2002

Business Waste

The [Michigan Recycled Materials Market Directory](#) helps Michigan businesses, organizations, and community collection programs find buyers for recyclable materials including glass, metals, oils and solvents, paper, plastics, pallets and wood.

The [Medical Waste Regulatory Act](#) (MWRA) is a law that controls how medical waste created by health care organizations is managed from the time that it is used until the time that it's thrown away.

Learn how to cut down on paper. Find [tips](#) on how to save resources, time, and money by using paper wisely.



Other useful websites

Waste to Wealth: Learn how recycling benefits the economy

Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs: Learn how to clean up and dispose of broken CFL bulbs

Mercury Thermostats: Recycle your mercury containing thermostat before it breaks.

Electronics Collection: Find local electronics waste collection sites

Green Hotels and Motels: Find Michigan hotels that are leaders in energy conservation

Composting: Composting made simple from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

Lead Free Fishing Tackle: Tips from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Glass containers: Learn how much energy you can save by recycling glass containers

Books: Swap books with people around the country.

Small electronics and printer cartridges: The United States Postal Service offers free mailing.

Household Network: Share tools and other items with your neighbors.

Packing Peanuts: Find collection centers for packing materials known as "packing peanuts"

Energy Star: Find products that use less energy from the Environmental Protection Agency

Catalog Choice: Stop unwanted catalogs from showing up in your mailbox.

Paper Recycling: Learn about ways for homes, schools, and businesses to recycle paper and save trees

Office Furniture: Steelcase's Environmental Partnership Program



For more information, contact the

Michigan Department of Community Health

**(517) 335-8350 or
(800) 648-6942**

or

Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment

***Recycling:*
(517) 373-8422 or**

***Household Hazardous Waste:*
(517) 373-1322**

Website addresses:

Michigan recycling and hazardous household waste collection centers:

http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,1607,7-135-3585_4130-115394--,00.html

Michigan recycling:
http://www.michigan.gov/deq/1,1607,7-135-3585_4130--,00.html