



# Household Hazardous Waste Fact Sheet

## What is the Delaware Estuary?

The Delaware Estuary is located in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States, surrounded by portions of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware. An estuary is where fresh water from a river mixes with salt water from an ocean or bay. Estuaries are fragile ecosystems, which support some of the Earth's richest and most productive habitats. The Delaware Estuary stretches approximately 134 miles, from the falls of the Delaware River between Trenton, New Jersey and Morrisville, Pennsylvania, south to the mouth of the Delaware Bay between Cape May, New Jersey and Cape Henlopen, Delaware.



**Fact:** If every household in the Delaware Estuary poured a cup of paint thinner down the kitchen sink, the local septic and sewers systems would receive almost 100,000 gallons of paint thinner. By entering septic and sewer systems, Household Hazardous Waste such as paint thinner can contaminate our groundwater and surface water, which for many of us are our drinking water sources.



## What is Household Hazardous Waste?

Household Hazardous Waste ("HHW") is any material thrown away by a household that poses a risk to human health or the environment. For example, the drain openers used to unclog your bathroom sink are corrosive. Gasoline used to operate your car or lawnmower is flammable. Herbicides and insecticides used in beautifying your garden may be toxic. The types of materials that actually constitute a HHW are extensive and range from more obvious materials like bleach, oil-based paint, and lighter fluid, to some less obvious ones like hair coloring products, floor wax, and air fresheners.

### For more information:

- [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov) (search HHW)
- [www.dnrec.state.de.us/dnrec2000/](http://www.dnrec.state.de.us/dnrec2000/)
- [www.phila.gov](http://www.phila.gov) (city services, streets, hazardous waste)
- [www.njhazwaste.com](http://www.njhazwaste.com)



For more information about the Delaware Estuary call 1-800-445-4935, or visit [www.DelawareEstuary.org](http://www.DelawareEstuary.org) and [www.delep.org](http://www.delep.org)

## Why is it important to properly dispose of HHW?

The current pace and type of development in the Delaware Estuary will cause dramatic changes in the landscape and in the manner in which our society will be able to function. The Delaware Estuary region is expected to gain almost 700,000 additional households• between 1990 and 2020, an increase of 19.2%. This growth in the number of households will likely cause an increase in the amount of household hazardous waste generated and a greater demand on the need to collect this waste.

The proper disposal of HHW can help to reduce the impact of stormwater runoff pollution. This occurs when rainwater washes pollutants, such as motor oil, fertilizers, animal waste, and litter, off of the land and into our waterways. HHW can become a part of this nonpoint source pollution if disposed of improperly.

To discourage residents from disposing of HHW in their garbage and to prevent pollution, municipalities across the Estuary have set up HHW collection programs. These programs ensure that HHWs are disposed of properly and they help to prevent potential disposal-related accidents. For example, HHW dumped down a storm drain may find its way into a river, creek, or stream, impacting wildlife, water quality, and our source of drinking water. HHW thrown away in your garbage could react with other wastes during collection, handling, and transportation, causing fires in the garbage collection vehicles, or dangerous fumes from chemical reactions at the waste handling facilities. Once waste is deposited at the landfill, there are further opportunities for co-mingling or reacting with other chemicals or rainwater. These reactions form air emissions, dangerous gases, and leachate that require collection and treatment to prevent groundwater contamination.

To avoid these problems, residents of the Delaware Estuary must consider educating themselves about safely managing their leftover household chemicals and consider using alternative products.

## What can you do?

Shop for environmentally friendly products. To find these products, look for words and phrases on the product labels such as: **non-toxic, all-natural, earth-friendly, green, safe for use around children and pets, environmentally safe, 100% biodegradable.**

Also, find out where you can properly dispose of your HHW and when collection events take place. In the State of Delaware, there is one HHW collection program operated by the Delaware Solid Waste Authority. In Pennsylvania and New Jersey, many counties or municipalities operate HHW collection programs.



## Facts about HHW collection programs in the Delaware Estuary:

### Top five HHW programs according to pounds of waste collected in 1998:

Ocean County, New Jersey	733,977 pounds
Monmouth County, New Jersey	664,000 pounds
Burlington County, New Jersey	567,293 pounds
Montgomery County, Pennsylvania	406,800 pounds
Camden County, New Jersey	360,147 pounds

### Top three programs with the largest budgets for HHW collection in 1998:

Monmouth County, New Jersey	\$773,190
Delaware Solid Waste Authority	\$600,000
Burlington County, New Jersey	\$374,000

### Top five programs having the most participants in 1998:

Monmouth County, New Jersey	5,593
Burlington County, New Jersey	3,928
Montgomery County, Pennsylvania	3,802
Camden County, New Jersey	3,278
Bucks County, Pennsylvania	2,720

The information in this fact sheet was taken from *Household Hazardous Waste Collection in the Delaware Estuary: An Inventory, Trend Analysis and Recommended Actions*, prepared by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. For a free copy of this report, please call 1-800-445-4935.

• A household is defined as a house, apartment, mobile home, trailer, group of homes, or a single room occupied as separate living quarters.

Each HHW collection program operates differently. The frequency of collection can vary from daily collection events to only a few days per year. The types of facilities will also vary. Some sites provide a permanent location or a fixed drop-off point, while others are mobile, meaning the drop-off site changes or a vehicle specially designed to collect HHW is used. In addition, not all programs collect the same products. So you really need to do your homework to find out where, when, and what you can dispose of through your community's collection program. To get you started, we have provided a listing of the HHW collection programs in the Delaware Estuary. Give your program a call to find out the specifics.

## Delaware

Delaware Solid Waste Authority (302) 739-5361

## New Jersey

Atlantic County Utilities Authority (609) 272-6821  
 Burlington County Division of Hazardous Wastes (609) 499-5200  
 Camden County Division of Environmental Affairs (609) 566-3131  
 Cape May County Municipal Utilities Authority (609) 465-9026  
 Cumberland County Improvement Authority (856) 825-3700  
 Gloucester County Improvement Authority (856) 478-6045  
 Mercer County Improvement Authority (609) 695-1200  
 Monmouth County Health Department (732) 922-4815  
 Ocean County Department of Planning and Solid Waste Management (732) 506-5047  
 Salem County Utilities Authority (856) 935-7900

## Pennsylvania

Berks County Solid Waste Authority (610) 373-7575  
 Bucks County Planning Commission (215) 345-3400  
 Chester County Health Department (610) 344-5940  
 Delaware County Solid Waste Authority (610) 892-9716  
 Lebanon County (collection sometimes provided by the County Conservation District)  
 Lehigh County Office of Solid Waste Management (610) 782-3046  
 Montgomery County Planning Commission (610) 278-3733  
 Philadelphia Streets Department-Sanitation Division (215) 686-5095  
 Schuylkill County Office of Solid Wastes and Resource Management (570) 628-1220

## Five Earth-Friendly Household Cleaning Recipes:

### Scouring –

Replace scouring powder with baking soda.

### All-purpose Cleaner –

Mix one cup of washing soda into a gallon of hot water. Wash surface with a lint-free cloth.

### Floor Cleaner –

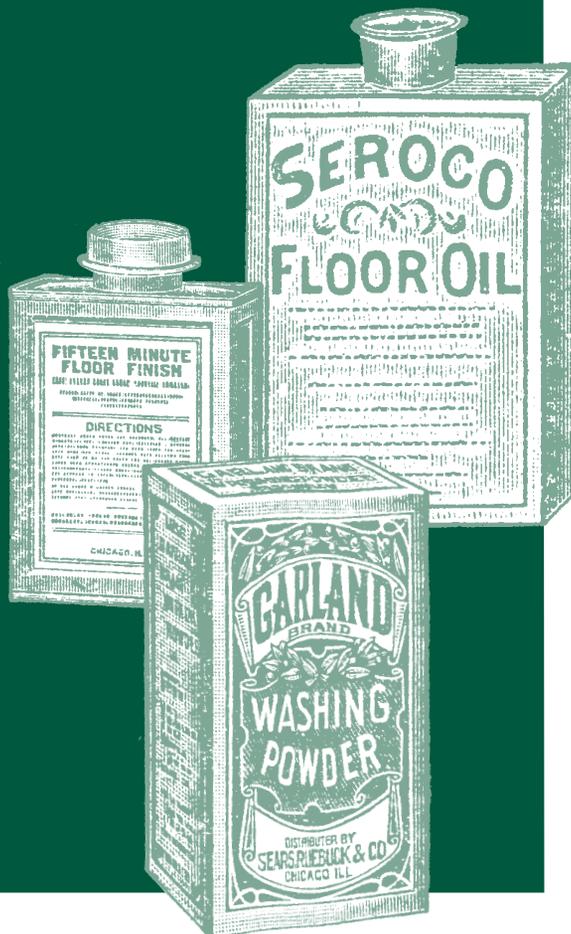
Mix 1/2 cup of vinegar in a gallon of water. Mop floor and allow to dry.

### Wood Furniture/Floor Polish –

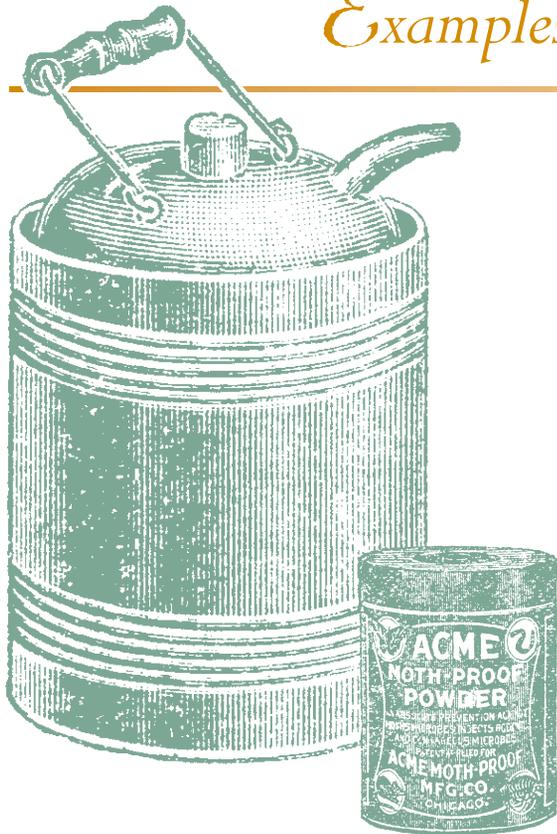
Mix 1/2 cup white vinegar and 1/2 cup vegetable oil in a pint-sized spray bottle. Rub on surface with lint-free cloth.

### Window and Glass Cleaner –

Put 1/4 cup vinegar in a pint-sized bottle and fill to the top with water. Spray on surface and rub clean with a dry cloth.



# Examples of Household Hazardous Wastes



## *Automotive*

Antifreeze  
Brake Fluid  
Car Batteries  
Car Wax and Polish  
Carburetor Cleaner  
Degreasers  
Diesel Fuel  
Engine Starting Fluid  
Gasoline  
Grease  
Lead-Acid Batteries  
Motor Oil  
Power Steering Fluid  
Tire Black  
Transmission Fluid  
Window Washer Fluid

## *Paint-Related Products*

Creosote  
Driveway Sealer  
Epoxies  
Linseed Oil  
Oil-Based Paint  
Paint Strippers  
Paint Thinners  
Primer  
Pruning Paint  
Resins  
Shellac  
Solvent-Based Paint  
Spray Paint  
Stains  
Turpentine  
Varnish  
Water Sealer

## *Household Cleaners*

Aluminum Cleaners  
Air Fresheners  
Bleach  
Cesspool Cleaners  
Disinfectants  
Drain Opener  
Dry-Cleaning Solvents  
Floor Wax  
Furniture Polish  
Lye  
Metal Polish  
Oven Cleaner  
Rug and Upholstery Cleaner

## *Pesticides*

Baygon  
Chlordane  
Diazinon  
Dursban  
DDT  
Flea Collars/Spray  
Fungicides  
Herbicides  
Insecticides  
Lindane  
Malathion  
Moth Balls/Crystals  
Mouse and Rat Poison  
Pyrethrins  
Rust-Proofing  
Strychnine  
Stump Killer  
Weed Killer  
Wood Preservatives

## *Other HHW*

## *Home Office*

Ammonia  
Circuit Boards  
Computer Screens  
Consumer Electronics  
Duplicator Fluid  
Ink Jet Cartridges  
Toner

## *Fuels*

Camping Fuel  
Kerosene  
Lighter Fluid

## *Personal Care*

Fingernail Polish & Remover  
Hair Coloring  
Hydrogen Peroxide  
Iodine  
Medications  
Mercury Thermometers

## *Home and Hobby*

Chemistry Kits  
Cutting Oil  
Fluorescent Lights  
Glues and Adhesives  
Gun Cleaning Solvents  
Picric Acid  
Pool Chemicals  
Rock Salt  
Smoke Detectors