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[Recycling Hazardous Wastes – How It's Done](#)

The following article covers a topic that has recently moved to center stage--at least it seems that way. If you've been thinking you need to know more about it, here's your opportunity.

According to official US environmental laws, a hazardous waste is generally referred to as any waste that poses serious threats to the environment or to public health. These types of waste have the potential to cause irreversible illness or environmental damage, especially if these are improperly treated, stored, transported, disposed or managed. Here's a primer on how to recycle and store hazardous waste.

What Differentiates Hazardous Waste From Commercial Waste?

Commercial waste is often defined as the waste or garbage that's often generated by most businesses and commercial establishments. Hazardous or toxic wastes on the other hand, are waste materials that may cause death, serious injury and other serious health risks to man and other living creatures.

In the US, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other state departments manage and oversee the laws which regulate the disposal of hazardous wastes. The EPA requires that hazardous wastes be handled with extra precaution, and should also be disposed at designated facilities. Among the materials that need to be handled with extra care include medical waste, commercially-generated waste, electronic items and components, radioactive materials, ammunition, and other unknown materials.

Hazardous Waste Cannot Be Disposed By Conventional Means

Now that we've covered those aspects of Recycling, let's turn to some of the other factors that need to be considered.

Hazardous wastes come in different physical states, from liquid, solid, gaseous and others. These types of wastes cannot simply be disposed through conventional garbage disposal methods, and depending on their physical composition, a specialized treatment or disposal process may need to be done.

A lot of people are totally unaware that their homes or offices are often filled with lots of toxic products, which may have harmful effects to the environment if these are improperly disposed. You can actually find lots of toxic products in your kitchen to storage room, from furniture polish, nail polish, floor wax, drain cleaners, laundry detergents, paints and solvents, toilet bowl cleaners, motor oils, antifreeze, window-washing fluids, batteries and many more. Remember that most of these fluids should never be poured down the drain, because they contain corrosive ingredients.

What Are The Different Methods For Recycling Hazardous Wastes?

One method for handling and recycling hazardous wastes is called waste reclamation. Through this method, a toxic or hazardous product is put through a process which makes it reusable again. Many chemical wastes can actually be reused through this recycling method.

Examples include mercury, which can be retrieved from mercury barometers and reused again for different purposes. In the proper recycling of household hazardous wastes, most towns and cities today have installed programs for recycling them. Some towns have receiving points where people can drop their used batteries, used paint, broken computers or damaged cars. Some towns also have collection facilities for recycling used motor oils, paints, textiles and other electronic components.

About the Author

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