



# Fact Sheet



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania • Department of Environmental Protection

#9

## HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTES (HHW)

### Introduction

Each year, Pennsylvania's four million households produce about 25,000 tons of waste that are hazardous in nature. Included are such items as old paints, pesticides, drain cleaners, and pool chemicals. Although exempted from regulation as hazardous wastes, such household hazardous waste (HHW), when collected and disposed of as ordinary trash, can present certain hazards for homeowners, children and trash collectors, especially if the material leaks from its packaging. When disposed of in waste-to-energy plants, such HHW can also increase the toxicity of the resulting emissions and ash.

Pennsylvania encourages counties and municipalities to hold special events to collect these materials, recycle as many of them as possible, and dispose of the rest in permitted hazardous waste facilities.

### HHW Collection & Management

Act 101 of 1988\* authorizes programs to collect and manage HHW, provided they are registered with DEP. Most ongoing programs collect HHW once a year at one or more drop-off sites. Others offer such services on an ongoing basis.

Several Pennsylvania local governments currently conduct HHW programs. The York County Solid Waste Authority, the first municipality to sponsor a program in 1985, continues to sponsor a program yearly. A permanent facility for HHW collection has been established at the Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority's office complex and another such facility is planned for Lehigh County.

The materials collected are recycled (e.g., used oil), used as a waste fuel (e.g., solvents) or are disposed of properly at hazardous waste facilities.

\**The Municipal Waste Planning, Recycling, and Waste Reduction Act, §1512.*

### Costs & Funding Options

Cost has been a major deterrent to program development. Wastes earmarked for disposal must be transported to out-of-state hazardous waste facilities at great expense.

As a result of Act 101's requirement to remove hazardous waste from wastes to be burned at resource recovery facilities, a few counties that own such facilities have used their tipping fees to fund HHW programs. Another option for municipalities hosting municipal waste landfills or resource recovery facilities is to fund programs with the host municipality fee, also required by Act 101. Chapter 13 specifies a minimum of \$1 per ton of waste received, but provides latitude to negotiate with the facility for a higher fee.

### HHW Grants

Act 155 of 1994, *The Household Hazardous Waste Funding Act*, reimburses municipalities for 50 percent of the developmental and operational costs associated with HHW collection programs, up to a total of \$100,000 per county per year. To make funding possible, Act 155 authorized the one-time transfer of \$3 million to the Recycling Fund (Act 101) from the Resource Recovery Development Fund (Act 198 of 1974). Any municipality that registers a HHW collection program with DEP is eligible to apply for the grant. Grants will be provided on a first-registered, first-conducted basis, with priority given to existing programs and those operated by counties, multicounty groups, and first- and second-class cities, as required by Act 101.

### Need Help?

DEP assistance to help establish HHW management programs includes seminars, individual counseling and various literature. Contact your DEP regional office for program registration forms, grant application forms and further information. For advice on dealing with the management of specific HHW items, please contact the Pennsylvania Environmental Council's HHW Hotline at 1-800-322-9214.

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
BUREAU OF LAND RECYCLING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT  
P.O. Box 8471  
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<b>Hazardous Waste Management</b>	<b>(717) 787-6239</b>
<b>FAX</b>	<b>(717) 787-0884</b>
<b>SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE, CONSHOHOCKEN</b> <i>Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery &amp; Philadelphia Counties</i>	<b>(610) 832-6212</b>
<b>NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE, WILKES-BARRE</b> <i>Carbon, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Northampton, Pike, Schuylkill, Susquehanna, Wayne &amp; Wyoming counties</i>	<b>(717) 826-2516</b>
<b>SOUTHCENTRAL REGIONAL OFFICE, HARRISBURG</b> <i>Adams, Bedford, Berks, Blair, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Mifflin, Perry &amp; York counties</i>	<b>(717) 705-4700</b>
<b>NORTHCENTRAL REGIONAL OFFICE, WILLIAMSPORT</b> <i>Bradford, Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Potter, Snyder, Sullivan, Tioga &amp; Union counties</i>	<b>(717) 327-3653</b>
<b>SOUTHWEST REGIONAL OFFICE, PITTSBURGH</b> <i>Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Cambria, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Somerset, Washington &amp; Westmoreland counties</i>	<b>(412) 442-4120</b>
<b>NORTHWEST REGIONAL OFFICE, MEADVILLE</b> <i>Butler, Clarion, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Venango &amp; Warren counties</i>	<b>(814) 332-6848</b>

**Note:** Request the assistance of the staff person assigned to the HHW Program.

This fact sheet and related environmental information are available electronically via Internet. Access the DEP website at <http://www.dep.state.pa.us> (choose Information by Subject/Waste Management).