

## What makes household hazardous waste *Hazardous*?

Household hazardous waste is corrosive, flammable, toxic, or reactive. When you purchase household products, be sure to read the labels carefully and avoid items with any of these properties.



### Corrosive Substances

Corrosive/caustic substances will destroy or damage other substances they come in contact with. They can damage eyes, skin, and tissue, with exposure resulting in chemical burns. Breathing or eating can damage the lungs, intestines and stomach.

#### Look at the Label

“Causes severe burns on contact” or “can burn eyes, skin, throat” mean a product is corrosive.



### Flammable Substances

Flammable substances can burn or ignite, causing fire. Solids, liquids, and gases can all be flammable. Flammable materials should never be used or stored near sources of heat, flame, sparks, static discharge, or in unventilated areas.

#### Look at the Label

“Don’t use near heat or flame,” “combustible,” and “do not smoke near this product” indicate a product is flammable.



### Toxic Substances

Toxic substances are capable of causing injury or death through ingestion, inhalation, or absorption. Many household cleaning products are toxic.

#### Look at the Label

Words such as “harmful or fatal if swallowed” or “use only in well ventilated areas” indicate a product is toxic.



### Reactive Substances

Reactive/explosive substances can spontaneously ignite or create poisonous vapors when mixed with other products. They can also explode when exposed to heat, light, sudden shock, or pressure.

#### Look at the Label

Fortunately, other than fireworks, most current consumer products are not reactive. The label will usually say “reactive.”

## The good news is, you already have safer alternatives in your house...

Two simple products—baking soda and vinegar—are safe and effective for countless household cleaning projects.



#### Use Baking Soda as a:

- General household cleaner
- Laundry pre-treatment
- Perspiration spot remover
- Scouring powder
- Tub/tile cleaner (with vinegar)
- Car battery corrosion remover
- Grease fire extinguisher
- Porcelain cleaner
- Silver polish
- Dish detergent



#### Use Vinegar as a:

- Chrome polish
- Decal remover
- Floor cleaner
- Pet odor remover
- Water softener
- Window cleaner
- Coffee pot stain remover
- Drain cleaner (with baking soda)
- Mildew remover (with salt)
- Paint brush softener
- Wood polish (3 parts olive oil, 1 part vinegar)

If you have household hazardous waste to dispose of, please do so properly.

For more information and a HHW collection schedule, call 603-417-6570 or visit [www.nashuarpc.org/hhw](http://www.nashuarpc.org/hhw).

# Reduce, Reuse, Responsibly Dispose

We often hear “reduce, reuse, recycle” for household trash. For Household Hazardous Waste (HHW), we can “reduce, reuse, responsibly dispose.” Reducing the amount of hazardous products you buy saves resources and energy used to manufacture them. Using hazardous household products you already have saves money and limits your need to purchase more. Properly disposing household hazardous waste prevents pollution that can contaminate our soil, air, and water, and harm human health.

## Reduce



Reducing the amount of HHW you generate starts with smart purchasing decisions. Often, non-hazardous alternatives exist that are just as effective at getting the job done. Look closely at labels to avoid products that are corrosive, flammable, toxic, or reactive. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Safer Choice label can help you identify less hazardous alternatives.

If you do buy a hazardous product, try to buy the smallest amount possible to meet your needs. If only larger containers are available, ask friends and family if they would like to share, rather than each household buying their own.

Before you buy a new hazardous household product, check your shelf. According to the US EPA, the average household can accumulate 100 pounds of HHW in their basements, garages, and storage closets. Chances are you have the exact product or something similar already. If you don’t, check with family and friends. And when you are finished with a product, offer it to others before disposing of it.

Store hazardous products in their original containers to prevent accidents and ensure you know exactly what you are reusing. When reusing leftover products, never mix them with other substances. Incompatible products could react, ignite, or explode.

## Reuse



## Responsibly Dispose



Even if you have made every effort to avoid buying and to use up hazardous products, many households find themselves with products that they need to dispose of. Household hazardous waste should never be put in the trash or down the drain, since it can pollute our soil, air, and water, and harm human health. Fortunately, you can properly dispose of HHW by attending a collection event. For a list of accepted materials and collection dates in Nashua and surrounding towns, visit [www.nashuarpc.org/hhw](http://www.nashuarpc.org/hhw).

