



FACT SHEET 7.7

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL USE, STORAGE AND DISPOSAL

Hazardous materials and waste can be used and generated as a result of a number of common hobby farm activities. Fuel, lubricants, antifreeze, fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, paints, cleaners, and medicine are a few of the hazardous products that may be used on hobby farms. The proper use, storage, and disposal of these materials is an important part of good housekeeping and water quality protection.

A hazardous material may occur as a solid, liquid or gas and is defined as any item or agent (biological, chemical, radiological, and/or physical) which has the potential to cause harm to humans, animals, or the environment, either by itself or through interaction with other factors.

If a material exhibits one or more of the characteristics listed below or contains a number of toxic constituents that have been shown to be harmful to human health and/or the environment, it is hazardous.

- **Ignitable** – capable of being burned or causing a fire.
- **Corrosive** – capable of dissolving metals and/or other materials and destroying living tissue on contact.
- **Reactive or Explosive** – unstable or undergoes a rapid or violent chemical reaction when exposed to air, water or other chemicals.
- **Toxic** – poisonous, either immediately or over a long period of time to plants and/or animals.



START WITH THE 3 R'S

- **Reduce** the amount of waste generated by purchasing only what you need. Consider a less hazardous or non-hazardous alternative.
- **Reuse** by giving unused or unwanted products to others who could use them.
- **Recycle** whenever possible by working with your community recycling center.

CAUTION!

If a petroleum spill of more than 10 gallons occurs, or if any size spill reaches a waterbody or storm drain, you should call the fire department (911), then the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection at their 24-hour spill reporting hotline (1-888-304-1133)

SAFETY FIRST

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS STORAGE

- Make an Emergency Management Plan, including what to do in case of a spill.
- Always keep a spill cleanup kit nearby in case of spills.
- Keep Safety Data Sheets for each chemical in a separate but nearby location from your storage area.
- Keep hazardous materials inside a secure structure or cabinet that can be locked, keeping them safe from spills and accidents and inaccessible to children and animals.
- Always store material in the original container with the original label. If the container is at risk of leaking, place it in a secondary container and promptly use or dispose of it.
- Consider placing the material in a secondary container, such as a plastic storage bin, to catch potential leaks or spills (but only if the storage bin material and the method of storage is consistent with the SDS instructions).
- Keep in a location away from surface water and groundwater resources.
- Do not store materials in basements, areas prone to flooding, or in areas with floor drains.
- Store in a dry area, away from sunlight, freezing temperatures, and extreme heat.
- Keep materials away from general living areas and always store away from food, animal feed and seeds.
- Separately store chemicals by hazard class such as flammables in one area and poisons in another. Similarly, separate acids and bases from each other and other incompatibles. Visit the following link for helpful information on chemical storage: www.bu.edu/ehs/files/2011/03/Chemical-Segregation-and-Storage-Chart.pdf.
- If keeping hazardous materials in a secure storage cabinet is not possible, store them off of the ground in a dry location to prevent corrosion or washing away of chemicals or in secondary containment such as a plastic tub (consult the SDS to make sure the chemical is not reactive with the plastic).
- Rags used to clean up liquid spills may be a fire hazard. Store them in a covered, combustion-proof container.

REMEMBER: REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF WASTE THAT MUST BE DISPOSED OF BY BUYING ONLY THE AMOUNTS NEEDED TO COMPLETE THE JOB OR GIVING THE REMAINING PRODUCT TO SOMEONE WHO CAN USE IT. THIS ALSO PREVENTS ACCIDENTS OR CONTAMINATION THAT COULD RESULT FROM IMPROPER STORAGE.

CAUTION!

Never dispose of hazardous materials or waste directly onto the ground, into surface waters or into storm drains or catch basins. Also, never dispose of hazardous materials or waste in household trash, unless the product label or SDS indicates this is okay.

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL USE

- Prepare for accidents – know what you will do if you have a spill or an emergency. Always have a spill kit nearby.
- Don't eat, drink, or smoke while handling hazardous products.
- Wear appropriate clothing and protective equipment for working with the chemicals – goggles, gloves, long sleeve shirt, respirator, or a dust mask may be just a few of the necessary protective measures to take.
- Never mix hazardous materials together unless specified by the manufacturer's instructions.
- Use the correct amount for the job as specified on the product label – twice as much is rarely twice as effective.
- If working indoors, make sure the space is well ventilated.
- Always wash your hands after handling hazardous materials.



HAZARDOUS MATERIAL DISPOSAL

- Find where you can dispose of household hazardous waste by visiting the MassDEP's Municipal Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facilities website: www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/recycle/hazardous/household-hazardous-waste-collection-facilities.html. If your city or town is not listed, there are several facilities available to residents of all municipalities.
- Contact your city or town to learn what hazardous material and waste collection programs are available.
- Used oil can be returned to the store where you bought it. Retailers are required to accept up to 2 gallons per person, per day if you have the purchase receipt.
- Oil filters can contain up to 12 ounces of oil. To recycle, puncture the domed part of the oil filter with a sharp tool. Drain filters on a rack while they are hot for 12 hours, then bring to the auto supply store for recycling.
- Never pour hazardous materials down drains, especially those connected to a septic system where materials may kill organisms needed to break down waste. This could also be a pathway for hazardous materials to contaminate groundwater.
- For help on recycling a specific type of hazardous material, visit the MassDEP's Hazardous Household Products: Handling and Management webpage: www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/recycle/hazardous/hazardous-household-products-handling-and-management.html.



IF YOU ARE GENERATING LARGE AMOUNTS OF HAZARDOUS WASTE, YOU MAY NEED TO REGISTER AS A HAZARDOUS WASTE GENERATOR.

Visit the following link for registration thresholds and additional information: www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/recycle/hazardous/the-very-small-quantity-generator-of-hazardous-waste.html.