

Landscaping

Landscaping - Waste Management

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What are some basic tips for waste management?

DO

- Seek information and advice from your local municipality regarding recycling, reusing, composting, litter control, waste disposal and environmental standards.
- Minimize potential for environmental damage (e.g., do not pour chemicals down the drain, on the ground, into storm sewers; recycle or compost trash as much as possible; etc.).
- Follow approved procedures from local municipality and environmental agencies for the disposal of unwanted or waste chemical products.
- Minimize waste by composting vegetation waste.
- Recycle all possible products (e.g., paper, glass, metal, plastic, etc.) whenever possible.

See the OSH Answers document [Infectious Waste](#) for information about the safe handling of infectious waste.

DO NOT

- Do not mix hazardous waste with general waste materials.
- Do not burn any material, unless permitted by local bylaws. Many Canadian communities have developed bylaws that do not allow open burning, or that restrict the types of materials that can be open-burned. Check with your local municipality.
- Do not burn plastics, rubber, tires, or any other materials known to produce dark, irritating smoke.
- Do not throw away unwanted chemicals into the general garbage or into bodies of water which could contaminate streams, irrigation, or drinking water.

What is hazardous waste?

Hazardous wastes are those wastes which, due to their nature and quantity, are a potential risk to human health and/or the environment and which require special disposal techniques to eliminate or reduce the hazard. If disposed of without proper treatment, hazardous wastes can cause serious, long-lasting damage to both terrestrial (land) and aquatic ecosystems. Human health impacts can also be severe. For example, long-term exposure to mercury, lead or cadmium can damage the brain, the kidneys, the nervous system, and fetal development.

In general, products that are corrosive, flammable, reactive or toxic are considered to be hazardous waste. Always use and dispose of products as directed by the manufacturer or supplier. Examples include:

- many solvents, pesticides, and paint strippers;
- products such as pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, insecticides, etc.;
- materials that catch fire easily (such as gasoline, paints, and solvents);
- materials that are reactive or unstable enough to explode or release toxic fumes (including acids, bases, ammonia, and chlorine bleach); or
- corrosives that can attack metal containers such as tanks, drums, and barrels (such as industrial cleaning agents, oven cleaners, drain cleaners, etc.) or those that can attack the skin.

There are many tips in other [Landscaping](#) OSH Answers documents.

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