

# Household Hazardous and Special Waste (HHSW)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What is Household Hazardous and Special Waste (HHSW)?

Household Hazardous and Special Waste (HHSW) is material that is not accepted in the curbside collection program and requires an alternative method of disposal.

Some Materials that are classified as HHSW are:

- **Corrosives** - Batteries, auto batteries, bleach and drain cleaners
- **Toxic Materials** - Adhesives, ammonia, antifreeze, cleaning fluids, disinfectants, photographic chemicals, solvents and fire extinguisher contents.
- **Flammable Products** - Barbecue starters, compressed gas cylinders, gasoline, lighter fluid, paints and stains, propane tanks, turpentine and motor oil.
- **Reactive Materials** - Aerosol cans, pool chemicals

### 2. Why Should I drop off my hazardous waste?

Many common household products contain hazardous chemicals. Once released into the environment, these substances may pose a serious threat to living organisms. Small quantities of hazardous substances can accumulate over time to reach dangerous levels and contaminate the air, water, and/or soil. Others can have a more immediate and devastating effect, such as poisoning.

Pesticides, fertilizers and other products can wash off lawns and gardens into storm drains and streams, polluting water. Solvents can escape to the atmosphere from the normal use of cleaners, paints and aerosol sprays, as well as from disposal or accidental spills. These substances not only pollute the air but they can also return to earth as precipitation, further polluting water and soil. Chemicals from hazardous wastes buried in unsecured landfills can leach out and move through the soil, eventually entering groundwater. From here, contaminants can spread to wells or surface water, making it unsafe to drink.

### 3. How do I dispose of my household hazardous and special waste?

- Keep materials in their original containers, or ensure that the containers are clearly labelled.
- Do not mix different products together.
- Tightly cap all containers.
- Bring them to a Bruce County HHSW collection event (household items only) at no charge. Most of the waste will be recycled into new products. The rest will be forwarded for safe disposal in a specially designed secure landfill.

#### **4. What happens to household hazardous and special waste?**

Once dropped off at the collection events, hazardous waste is transported for further processing. Here is what happens:

- Paint is reprocessed into new recycled paint and by-products are bulked and sent for fuel blending.
- Stains, non-paint coatings, aerosols, fuels and adhesives are bulked and sent for fuel blending.
- Acids and bases are neutralized and discharged once tested.
- Pharmaceuticals, pesticides, batteries, and oxidizers are sent to a secure landfill.
- Automotive batteries are dismantled and lead is reclaimed and the sulfuric acid is neutralized.
- Oil is sent to a refinery to make recycled oil.

#### **5. Who can use the HHSW Collection Events?**

All Bruce County residents are welcome to attend any of the collection events held throughout the County.

#### **6. I live in Kincardine, can I go to the HHSW Collection event being held in Lucknow?**

Collection events are held in each municipality; however Bruce County residents are welcome to attend any of the events located throughout the County.

#### **7. Is there a fee for disposing HHSW at the Bruce County collection events?**

Residents can dispose of HHSW at the collection events free of charge.

#### **8. Is there a quantity limit?**

There is no limit to the number of containers and/or items residents can bring to the collection events; however there IS a container quantity restriction. Containers with a volume greater than 30 litres will NOT be accepted.

#### **9. Should I combine all of my HHSW into one container?**

Never mix different products together. Hazardous and Special waste materials can catch fire, react or explode when mixed with other substances, if it's corrosive or toxic. Keep materials in their original containers or ensure containers are clearly labeled.

#### **10. What if I do not know what is in the container?**

If you are unsure of the contents in a container, ensure the container is properly sealed and bring it to a HHSW collection event. The County hires a contractor for the collection, transportation and processing of the HHSW materials collected at the events. There will be a Chemical Technician on-site to complete any necessary testing if the material type is unknown.

**11. Can I bring my computer and other electronics to the HHSW collection events?**

Electronic waste is not accepted at the HHSW collection events. All Bruce County Municipalities have an electronic waste recycling program; please contact your local municipality for further information.

**12. Are light bulbs accepted at the HHSW events?**

Compact fluorescent light bulbs and tubes are hazardous because they contain mercury vapor, small amounts of lead and phosphorus dust. Bring your Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFL's) to a HHSW collection event for proper disposal. DO NOT break fluorescent tubes – this will release these hazardous compounds into the air. The tubes and bulbs are collected at the events are sent to Aevitas in Ayr, ON where the glass, metal and mercury are extracted for recycling.

**13. Do I need any paperwork?**

When you arrive at one of the County's collection events you will be asked to fill out a **HHSW Ticket**. To save time at the event print off the "HHSW Ticket" from the 'Reports/Downloads' section and fill it out before you come to the event.

**14. I own a local business and generate hazardous and special waste; can I dispose of my waste at the Bruce County HHSW Collection events?**

The County of Bruce cannot accept hazardous and special waste from Industrial, Commercial, Institutional (IC&I) and Agricultural generators. For information on proper disposal requirements, contact the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) at [www.ene.gov.on.ca](http://www.ene.gov.on.ca) or 1-800-565-4923, or a MOE licensed hazardous waste carrier/hauler.

**15. If I have a specific HHSW questions who do I contact?**

Any questions regarding the Bruce County HHSW Collection events can be forwarded to the Bruce County Highways Department. 519-881-2400 or 1-877-681-1291 ext.4