

Latex paint and stains can safely be put in the garbage for disposal at a landfill, as long as the paint is dry or solidified first.

Dumped illegally, liquid latex paint can be a hazard by plugging or damaging septic fields, overloading sewage treatment plants and creating environmental hazards on the ground.

Residents should dry out latex paint and stains and put it in the garbage **with the lid off**, using one of several methods:

- **Air:**
 - Remove the lid and let the paint dry out in the can
 - Protect from freezing and rain as well as curious children and animals
 - This only works when an inch or less of paint is left in the can and is most effective in the warmer months.
- **Cat litter:**
 - Mix latex paint with an equal amount of clay-based cat litter
 - Stir in completely and let the paint dry. It takes about 10 minutes for the cat litter to harden.
 - Add more cat litter if the paint is soft or runny after 10 minutes. Repeat until the material is very thick.
- **Paint hardener:**
 - Mix latex paint or stain with commercial paint hardener according to the directions.
 - At the end of that time, paint will have a tacky, oatmeal-like consistency that will not spill out.

Be sure it's latex paint or stain! Look on the label for the word "latex," or for directions to clean up or thin with water.

*Once the latex paint has hardened or solidified, **place the can with the lid off** in your garbage container. The garbage hauler needs to see that the paint has been solidified.*

Other ideas of using up latex paint or stains:

- Use the paint when painting a garage, dog house or use as a primer coat for another painting project.
- Donate excess paint to a school, theater group or non-profit agency.

Oil-based paints should be taken to a hazardous waste facility for proper disposal.