

PAINT AND PAINT RELATED MATERIALS

Oil-based and water-based paints, as well as paint thinner, may be classified as hazardous waste. These substances should never be poured down the drain or left to evaporate, unless directed to do so. Oil-based paints are often labeled as alkyd, polyurethane, or varnish, while water-based paints are typically called latex, vinyl, or acrylic. Depending on their formulation, paints might be regulated as hazardous waste when they are discarded. In addition, both water-based and oil-based paints, as well as stains containing certain metallic pigments or fortifiers such as cadmium, chromium, lead, silver, barium, mercury, arsenic, and selenium, are classified as hazardous waste when disposed of. Never store paint containers where they might be exposed to the elements. If paint cans have missing or damaged labels, replace them with your own labels that include the manufacturer, product name, product number, and chemical constituents.



Oil-Based Paint

Oil-based paints, including stains, are regulated because of their flammability and the presence of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) like xylene and toluene. Whenever possible, opt for water-based paint instead of oil-based. If oil-based paint is necessary, ensure that all waste is managed properly. Due to their VOC content, excess oil-based paints cannot be dried out and must be collected by Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) for proper disposal. Never dispose of oil-based paint or its residuals down the drain. Empty oil-based paint containers with no more than 3% by weight of the container's total capacity remaining can be air-dried to solidify any remaining residual paint in the container. Once dried, empty paint containers can be disposed of in regular trash.

Water-Based Paint

Water-based paints are typically not regulated since they are nonflammable. Never dispose of wet paint in the regular trash. When cleaning paint brushes, pans, and related materials, always use a drain connected to the sanitary sewer system—never the storm sewer. Once water-based paint has fully solidified, it can be safely disposed of in regular trash. To expedite the solidification of latex paint, you can add sawdust, vermiculite, or a commercially available paint solidifier and allow it to evaporate.

Paint Thinners

Used paint thinners must be collected and disposed of by EH&S. Store used thinners in metal cans or glass bottles with a tightly sealed lid, and label them as "hazardous waste." Never pour paint thinners or their residuals down the drain.

Aerosol Cans

Full or partially full aerosol cans must be collected and disposed of by EH&S. Empty cans that contain no residual materials or pressure can be discarded in regular trash. If the cans do not meet these criteria, they are still considered hazardous waste.



To dispose of oil-based paints and related materials, please submit an online pickup request using the EH&S Chemical/Bio Waste Pickup Request form available at: <https://csn.campusoptics.com/hw/chemical-bio-waste-pick-up-request-form>. Please contact EH&S at 702-651-7445 or ehs@csn.edu if you have any questions.