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# Do you care?

# Do you care...



about keeping hazardous waste out of our streams and rivers?

*Do some detective work – your cupboards could be key to improving the quality of surface water in Waterloo!*





Most of us have some pretty harsh chemicals stashed away around the house: pesticides, paint, batteries or motor oil.

What you may not realize is the residue and containers from these products could get into storm or wastewater and harm our rivers and streams for years to come. That's why every single household in Waterloo can play a part in keeping clean water for the future.

With the help of Elliot Mess, a little detective work and planning can make all the difference!

*Take a tip from Elliot Mess and do some detective work in your cupboards and drawers.*

## PESTICIDES

### Best Disposal Method: Special Collection Day

Pesticides can work wonders for controlling unwanted insects. They also kill beneficial insects, and they're poisonous to humans and animals. If you dispose of them improperly, they can affect the water quality of streams and rivers for years to come.

**Elliot Mess says:** NEVER bury containers from insecticides, throw containers or leftover insecticide in the trash, dispose of it in a septic tank, pour it on the ground or dump it down the sewer!

Instead, store the containers in a cardboard box, away from the reach of children and pets, until they can be brought to the Hazardous Waste Special Collection Day.

## BATTERIES

### Best Disposal Method: Special Collection

The rechargeable batteries that power our cell phones, laptop computers, camcorders and power tools become a source of dangerous heavy metals like mercury, lead and cadmium when they end up in our landfills. From there, the heavy metals leach into the soil, the groundwater and surface water.

**Elliot Mess says:** When rechargeable batteries are spent, wrap them in plastic and keep them in a container until the Hazardous Waste Special Collection Day is held. Alkaline and carbon-zinc batteries – the non-rechargeable type used in toys, radios and flashlights – are safe to put in the trash.

Car batteries are especially hazardous to the environment! Check with your local auto supply store to find the closest disposal location for car batteries. Many stores offer a core-charge refund when you return your old battery after purchasing a new one.

## PAINT

### Best Disposal Method: Dry and harden unused latex paint prior to placing in trash

Leftover paint contains chemicals like solvents and metals that can make their way into rivers and streams. The choices you make, however, can help protect our water quality from these chemicals.

**Elliot Mess says:** Choose water-based (latex) paint instead of oil-based whenever possible. Avoid aerosol paints. Don't buy more than you need, and give unused paint to a neighbor, community theater group or low-income agency.

To dispose of a small quantity of latex paint, simply remove the lid and let the paint dry. If you have a larger quantity, line a cardboard box with plastic or newspaper and pour thin layers into it – allowing each layer to dry before adding the next.

Latex paint, once it is completely dried and hardened, is safe to put in the trash. Leave the lids off cans so collectors will know the paint is dried out.

Lead or oil-based paints should be disposed of *only* during the special household hazardous waste collection day.

## MOTOR OIL

### Best Disposal Method: Drop off at used oil collection site

Did you know that the used motor oil from a single oil change can ruin a million gallons of fresh water? Improperly disposing of motor oil not only is an environmental hazard, but also wastes a valuable, non-renewable resource – petroleum. Taking your used oil to a proper collection place allows it to be reused as an industrial fuel supplement or refined for reuse as a lubricant.

**Elliot Mess says:** Please do the right thing and never dump used motor oil down storm sewers, into the trash or onto the ground. Instead, put it in a clean plastic container (such as a milk jug) and drop it off at a collection center! Look under "Oil Waste" in the Yellow Pages for locations, or ask a local repair shop or lube center where used oil should be taken.

*See how simple it is to keep hazards out of storm and wastewater and protect our water quality? Please, start today!*

*You can make a big difference in Waterloo's quality of water!*

For questions on the Special Collection Day or disposing of hazardous waste, call Waterloo's Storm Water Quality Management at 319-291-4312, or visit [waterloo-ia.org](http://waterloo-ia.org). For additional information on clean water, visit [epa.gov/nps](http://epa.gov/nps) and [epa.com/npdes/stormwater](http://epa.com/npdes/stormwater).

