

## **H-GAC HHW Guidance Document**

The proper management of household hazardous waste (HHW) is a growing concern in our region. It is in all our best interests to encourage proper management of HHW to minimize risk to human health and the environment, as well as danger to sanitation workers who may be inadvertently exposed to HHW improperly disposed of in the municipal waste stream.

### **What is HHW?**

Household hazardous waste (HHW) is defined as any solid waste classified as hazardous which is generated in a household by a consumer.

### **Goals of an HHW collection**

- Provide proper disposal of HHW
- Remove HHW from homes, thus reducing exposure and potential injury
- Reduce danger to waste collectors and other sanitation workers
- Increase general public awareness of the HHW found in most homes and how these materials may impact human health and the environment
- Educate residents as to the best methods of HHW disposal

### **What materials can I expect at an HHW collection?**

A possible breakdown of HHW is:

- 55% paints and paint products
- 15% flammables
- 10% pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers
- 5% corrosives
- 5% automotive fluids
- 10% other miscellaneous materials

### **Public Education Component**

The greater your public education efforts, the more demand you are likely to see for HHW collection services. You can use many forms of media for public education. There are some programs and materials already developed that you may wish to use, from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's or Environmental Protection Agency's websites.

### **How much will HHW collection cost?**

To get a better idea of the potential costs for your own community, you can work with an HHW disposal contractor who can help you estimate costs. H-GAC has a regional HHW Collection, Transportation and Disposal Contract available to local governments in the H-GAC region. For more information and to view pricing, visit the H-GAC website at: <http://www.h-gac.com/community/solid-waste-management/household-hazardous-waste.aspx>.

## **Collection Methods**

There are several possible methods for HHW collection:

***One-Day Collection Events*** - One day collection events are the most common approach. The planning and operation of a one-day collection event involves the setting of a date for collection, advertising the service to the public, and then conducting the program. The number of sites and length of program can vary. One-day events are typically held once per year, in the spring or fall (when weather conditions are best). The one site/one time period approach is most applicable to smaller communities and requires less capital investment.

***Permanent Collection Sites*** - Permanent collection sites increase the participation of a collection program by increasing convenience. Permanent collection sites are typically open a few days per week and generally have higher operation costs than one-day collection events, but have reduced per capita disposal rates.

***Mobile Collection Units*** - Mobile collection units can provide ongoing, year-round collection of HHW. Mobile units operate on a fixed, predictable schedule.

***Curbside Collection*** - Curbside collection of HHW may also be utilized. This type of collection is typically operated in conjunction with curbside recycling programs. While participation levels are high, curbside collection is costly and requires specially trained personnel and specialized equipment. The types of materials collected in curbside programs are limited compared to other types of collection.

## **Information Needed Prior to Event Planning**

It is **mandatory** that contact be made with the TCEQ's HHW Management Program. Please contact the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality at either (512) 239-3143 or [recycle@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:recycle@tceq.texas.gov). (Your disposal contractor may be able to assist you with your TCEQ reporting requirements.)

## **For more information contact:**

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