

How To Reduce, Reuse and Properly Dispose of Latex Paint

In July, Friends of Deckers Creek holds their annual Paint Exchange Event making it the perfect time to share How to Reduce, Reuse and Properly Dispose of Latex Paint and explain how a Paint Exchange works. Did you know that 80 million gallons, or 10%, of paint purchased by consumers goes unused. It makes sense if you're not sure how much paint you need for that room, wall or project. Then, even with knowing how much you need, you find yourself with leftover paint. Here are some tips for how to reduce, reuse and properly dispose of latex paint. First, Buy What You Need, then Store Properly to Use Up Leftover Paint, or to Share for Reuse or Dispose of Properly.

Buy What You Need

To reduce the amount of leftover paint from your project begin by finding out how much you need. There are several ways to find out, but the first step is to measure the area you plan to paint. Then, go to your favorite online hardware or paint store to see if they have a Paint Calculator. Many brand name stores, and paint companies, have this tool and they are very easy to use. If you would rather not use the computer or do the math, take the measurements to the store and talk to the paint salesperson. They will be able to guide you. It is likely you'll still have leftover paint. If you plan to keep for touch ups, other projects, or to share for reuse, you will want to make sure to store your paint properly.

Store Properly

To make sure your paint is good to use or share later, you will want to store it properly. There are various specific

recommendations depending on the paint brand so read the label or ask the paint salesperson. However, there are some consistent general tips. For example, maintain the seal by using a paint key (instead of a screwdriver to avoid damaging the seal area), close the lid properly (clean off excess paint from lid, rim and label and use a rubber hammer to tap lid in place. You want a tight seal), store in a temperature-controlled environment to keep it from extreme cold and heat, and from direct sunlight. Then, find the best storage area away from moisture, kids and pets. Another option, instead of storing it, is to use up leftover paint.

Use Up Leftover Paint

If you don't want to store leftover paint, can't make it to the Paint Exchange or you're not ready to dispose of it, look around your place for items or areas that could use a nice coat of paint. There are many ideas for the leftover paint from painting furniture, vases, picture frames, to tires for a planter, steps, and for a neighborhood beautification project. Paint not only covers your wall or items, but it can bring life to your area or neighborhood and protect items from the elements.

Share for Reuse

The Friends of Deckers Creek Paint Exchange is an event where residents can "exchange" latex paint by dropping off and picking up paint that has already been dropped off. Residents do not have to exchange latex paint to participate. Residents can just stop by and drop off latex paint or pick up paint for free. Leftover paint at the end of the event will be collected by

the Monongalia County SWA to create a Community Paint Reuse Program to provide to residents, non-profits and other organizations. Details are coming soon. If you don't want to store, use up or share for reuse then you'll want to dispose of your latex paint properly.

Dispose of Properly

Latex paint can easily be disposed of properly because it is a water-based paint. Unlike oil-based paint, which is a hazardous waste*, latex paint only needs to be dried out and hardened. It can then be tossed in your regular trash. Check with your trash hauler to learn how they want you to place latex paint in the trash. The most important thing is that the paint is completely dried out and hardened. A few ways to dry out paint are to use absorbent, like cat litter or shredded paper, to absorb the liquid, or use a paint hardener or for a small amount of paint, take off the lid and let it dry out and harden. For more tips about how to reduce, reuse and properly dispose of latex paint contact the Monongalia County SWA.

Contact Us-Monongalia County SWA

To keep our county beautiful and safe and to learn more about how to reduce, reuse and properly dispose of latex paint contact the Monongalia County Solid Waste Authority at 304-292-3801, email at moncountyswa@gmail.com, visit our website monongaliacountyswa.com and subscribe to our monthly e-newsletter.

**Take oil-based paint to MUB's Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event Day on August 2nd.*