

NEWS

How do you get rid of household hazardous waste on Cape Cod? Collection dates, places

Eric Williams Cape Cod Times

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They hide in sheds, garages and cellars all across Cape Cod.

Toxic souvenirs of days gone by. A rogue's gallery of half-full herbicide containers, sloshy gas cans, old paint and varnish, maybe even rodent poison. Egads!

Every once in a while, you'll think, "I've got to get rid of this stuff." You know it's bad for people, pets and the environment. But who the heck would take all this frightening goop?

Well, with a little planning and the help of Barnstable County's Household Hazardous Waste Collections program, you've got a chance to clean up your act. The county just released the 2023 schedule of collections events, and it offers residents of all Cape Cod towns several close-to-home opportunities to purge the poison.

How much household hazardous waste did the Barnstable County program collect in 2022?

According to Kalliope Chute, hazardous materials environmental specialist for Barnstable County's Cooperative Extension, the program collected 600,970 pounds of hazardous waste from about 6,200 individuals at 24 events in 2022.

What is household hazardous waste?

According to the Barnstable County Household Hazardous Waste Collections program, they are "products and materials that are just too toxic to throw in our trash because they could harm you, your family, or your environment." These include "paints, chemicals, mercury, and marine materials."

Why is hazardous waste such a big deal?

These products can cause poisonings, burns or eyesight damage. According to Barnstable County, thousands of U.S. adults visit emergency rooms every year after interactions with household hazardous waste, which also poses serious threats to young children and pets. And, according to Chute, they can pose a risk for first responders, particularly in the case of a fire.

Cape Cod beach debris Mysterious yellow plastic strands on Cape Cod beaches lead to explosive revelation

How do you identify a hazardous household product?

Luckily, this part can be pretty easy. Read the label of the product and look for words like "Caution," "Poison," "Warning" or "Danger." This can be an indication that the product poses a risk to people or pets and could contaminate groundwater.

Where should I look in my house for unneeded hazardous household products?

According to Barnstable County, hazardous household products are often found in kitchens, bathrooms, basements, garages and sheds. They can include metal polish, oven cleaner, drain opener, paint thinner, insecticides and even mercury in old thermometers or blood pressure gauges.

What happens at the household hazardous waste collections site?

Put the household hazardous waste products you want to get rid of in a plastic bin or sturdy box and take them to the collection site. Perhaps the best thing about the process is you don't have to get out of your vehicle.

Staff will greet you and provide educational material. You'll be asked if you have products containing mercury to recycle.

Your waste will be sorted and staff will ask a few survey questions. Then you'll proceed to the unloading station. Folks are asked to stay in their vehicles throughout the process.

What is the 2023 event schedule for the Barnstable County Household Hazardous Waste Collections program?

Barnstable

At the Barnstable Transfer Station, 45 Flint St., Marstons Mills

April 1: 9 a.m. to noon

June 24: 9 a.m. to noon

Aug. 26: 9 a.m. to noon

Sept. 23: 9 a.m. to noon

Bourne, Sandwich, Falmouth, and Mashpee

April 15: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Sandwich High School, 365 Quaker Meetinghouse Road., East Sandwich

June 17: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Falmouth High School, 874 Gifford St., Falmouth

Aug. 19: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Mashpee High School, 500 Old Barnstable Road., Mashpee

Oct. 21: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Bourne Integrated Solid Waste Management Facility, 201 MacArthur Blvd., Bourne

Grow your own food on Cape Master Gardeners Association offers Cape backyard horticulture classes

Dennis

At Tony Kent Arena, 8 South Gages Way, South Dennis

June 3: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Aug. 5: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sept. 9: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Eastham and Orleans

May 13: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Eastham Department of Public Works, 555 Old Orchard Road, Eastham

Sept. 16: 9 a.m. to noon at Orleans Department of Public Works, 40 Giddiah Hill Road, Orleans

Provincetown, Truro and Wellfleet

June 3: 9 a.m. to noon at Wellfleet Transfer Station, 370 Coles Neck Road, Wellfleet

Aug. 5: 9 a.m. to noon at Truro Transfer Station, 115 Route 6, Truro

Oct .7: 9 a.m. to noon at Provincetown Transfer Station, 90 Race Point Road, Provincetown

Yarmouth

At the Yarmouth Senior Center, 528 Forest Road, West Yarmouth

July 15: 9 a.m. to noon

Oct. 7: 9 a.m. to noon