



KY-A-Syst for the Home
Environmental Stewardship
for Homeowners

Managing Hazardous Household Products

Teaching Guide

Introduction:

Almost all households are home to hazardous products and produce hazardous waste. Paint thinner or other solvents produce fumes that are hazardous to breathe. Motor oil or pesticides may pollute your well or a nearby stream. Even items like nail polish or spot removers can be hazardous. If they are in your home, then you are responsible for the safe use, reuse, or disposal of these potentially hazardous materials.

There are many ways to avoid problems. Always read the label and look for signal words such as *caution*, *warning* or *danger*. Labels give information about how to safely use, store and dispose of products. Don't just read the product label, follow the directions so the products don't cause health problems or harm the environment.

When purchasing products, buy only what you need. Product containers that are kept for long periods of time may become damaged and leak. The products may also change chemically. New laws could be enacted that ban or restrict chemicals and/or make their disposal more difficult.

Hazardous products should be kept in their original containers, sealed tightly and stored in a dry place. Keep them away from anything that could cause them to catch fire. Routinely check storage areas to make sure containers are not leaking and their sides are not bulging.

Disposal of hazardous products is wasteful and should be your last option. It is also potentially unsafe for you and the environment if not done properly. Buy only what you need, use up leftover products, and recycle if possible. Pass along leftover products to neighbors or local organizations if they can use them.

Focus on Children:

Children are at higher risk for harmful effects from chemical exposures than adults. Children put many things into their mouth, which means their exposure is often greater than that of adults in the same household. In addition, children are continually developing, and chemical exposure may affect the growth of their nervous, respiratory, and immune systems. Children may not be able to get rid of toxins in their bodies as well as adults. Each year, unintentional poisonings from household chemicals and medicines kill about 30 children and prompt more than 1 million calls to the nation's Poison Control Centers. Children take in more air when breathing and have the potential to be more easily exposed to hazardous household products. According to the EPA, almost 50% of households with children under the age of 5 have at least one pesticide stored in an unlocked cabinet.

Lesson Purpose and Objectives:

Purpose: This lesson is designed to help homeowners become familiar with the proper use, storage, and disposal of hazardous household products and to identify potential problems.

Objectives: This lesson guide contains a lot of information about managing hazardous household products. It may be difficult to cover all the material in one session. Therefore, you are encouraged to select a program based on the type of audience you are serving and their needs. It is best to select and focus on *only two or three* of the following objectives.

Learn how to carefully read labels to determine if a product is hazardous.

Understand the importance to your family and the environment of following the directions on hazardous product labels.

Realize the importance of buying only the quantities you need of hazardous products.

Study the safest ways to use hazardous products.

Learn how to safely store household products in their own containers in safe areas where they are inaccessible to children and pets.

Become knowledgeable about the safe disposal of leftover hazardous products.

Other (Please list in the space below):

Suggested Resources & Materials:

The following items are available for your use in teaching this lesson. Select and use resources according to your program focus and needs. Resource materials are available from the ENRI Resource Center, 233 Scovell Hall, University of Kentucky unless otherwise noted. County agents should request these materials in advance.

Publications & Fact Sheets

Numbered-Series Extension Publications available through order entry:

- *Hazardous Household Substances: Alternatives That Are Relatively Free to Toxic Effects* HE4-904
- *Understanding Pesticide Labels and Labeling* ID-100
- *Cockroach Elimination in Homes and Apartments* ENT-1
- *Invisible Itches: Insect and Non-Insect Causes* ENT-58

Suggested Resources & Materials: (cont'd.)

Publications & Fact Sheets (cont'd.)

ENRI Fact Sheets – camera-ready copies available through ENRI web site at: <http://www.ca.uky.edu/enri>

- *Disposal of Leftover Paint* – ENRI-316
- *Recycling of Used Oil* – ENRI-317
- *Disposal of Batteries* – ENRI-318

Kentucky Division of Waste Management Facts sheets – camera-ready copies available at: <http://www.nr.state.ky.us/nrepc//dep/waste/factsheets/factsheet.htm>

- *Antifreeze*
- *Illegal Dumps*
- *Used Oil*
- *Waste Tire Management (for retailers)*
- *Waste Tire Management (for consumers)*

Videos (Available through the Ag. Communications video library.)

- *E Hazards: They're Out There* (targeted to youth)
- *Hazardous Waste in Our Homes?* (VHD-0794)
- *Dealing with Hazardous Household Waste* (VEI-0839)
- *Applying Pesticides Correctly...The Label is your Guide* (VET-0316)

Display

Dealing with Household Hazardous Waste: This exhibit, designed to fit a “medium” sized display board, give categories for household hazardous products and ways to identify these products. It also includes tips for purchasing, handling, storing and disposing of household hazardous products. Impacts of improper disposal are also depicted.

Other: (Please specify below.)

Suggested Teaching Techniques and Activities:

Select only those activities that will help you teach the lesson. Limit selection according to your program focus, audience, and length of lesson.

- Use the transparencies to give an overview of hazardous household product management issues and strategies. Encourage discussion as you present the information.
- Have the participants read the Ky-A-Syst for the Home publication *Managing Hazardous Household Products*. Ask them to go back through the publication and answer the questions in the boxes. Suggest they record all B and C responses and list changes they plan to make from information in the publication or from other sources. They can do this on the Action Checklist on Page 4. Encourage them to set target dates for taking action. Suggest that they review the checklist from time to time to see if any responses have changed.
- Show the video *Hazardous Wastes in Our Homes?* Discuss the importance of reading labels and recognizing signal words or phrases. Stress how imperative it is to follow the directions on the labels.
- Invite someone from the Poison Control Center to come to the meeting and speak to the group about what to do if someone in the home is exposed to a hazardous household product. Ask the representative to bring handout materials with emergency information and telephone numbers to call.
- Show the video *Dealing with Hazardous Household Waste*. Discuss proper disposal of hazardous household waste. Provide information on the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Rinse and Return Recycling Program. Have participants talk about any experiences they have had with exposure to hazardous products in the home. Suggest to the group that they might want to host a local swap program to exchange leftover hazardous products rather than throwing them away.
- Have someone come in and talk to the group about alternatives to the use of hazardous household products. Discuss Integrated Pest Management (IPM) with the audience and ask if anyone has used it.
- Assemble a display of hazardous products with non-hazardous "look-alikes". (See the following page for more information about this.) Discuss the importance of storing all hazardous products out the reach of children and pets.
- *If working with children* - Show the video *E Hazards: They're Out There*. Talk about the importance of storing hazardous household products properly in their own containers and out of the reach of children and pets.
- Other: (Please specify below.)

Beware of Look-A-Likes

Things aren't always as they seem, and some hazardous products look like items that are safe and consumable. In some cases, the actual products look very similar, while in others it's the packaging that's almost identical. Many counties have conducted programs about hazardous products and their non-hazardous look-a-likes. A display and discussion could be easily integrated into a lesson or workshop on managing household hazardous waste. Following is a list of hazardous products and their look-a-likes. This list is likely not complete – and you may be able to quickly identify another pair to include in your exhibit.

Package Look-A-Likes:

Comet cleanser	parmesan cheese
cat food	tuna fish
dog biscuits	animal crackers

Product Look-A-Likes:

liquid pine cleaner	apple juice
red cold tablets	“red hots” candy
grape-flavored cold medicine	grape drink
glass cleaner	blue fruit drink
rat poison	sunflower seeds, Nerds candy
antacid tablets	Sweet Tarts candy
chocolate laxatives (ex. Exlax)	chocolate candy bars
motor oil	honey
used motor oil	maple syrup
alcohol	water

Information supplied by Kay Hall, Hancock County Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences, and Patty Lucas, Integrated Pest Management Specialist.

Suggested Evaluation Techniques:

Select the technique(s) best suited to the information you would like to obtain from your audience. Immediate evaluation will provide reaction to the presenter and program materials. Delayed evaluation will give a better indication of changed behavior and attitudes.

- ◆ At the close of the program, ask each participant to name *one* thing they learned from the lesson.
- ◆ At the end of the program, ask each participant to list something they will go home and do as a result of the lesson. Have them write the item on a piece of paper with their name and the date of the lesson. Save the papers and several weeks/months later survey the group to see if they actually did it.
- ◆ Hand out a copy of the *Help Us Serve You Better* evaluation form. Ask participants to complete the form and leave it in a specific place as they leave.

Suggested Evaluation Techniques: (cont'd.)

- ◆ Return to the group several weeks later and ask them to fill out the Follow-up Feedback Form and collect them as they leave. If you cannot return to the group in person, contact a representative number of the participants by phone and collect the data requested on the Follow-Up Feedback Form from each.

- ◆ Other: (Please specify below.)

Reporting Impacts (*Information for County Extension Agents*):

Use the following priority indicators and program accomplishment (PAC) codes when reporting impacts as a result of this program. Information taken from the FY01 PAC and priority indicators lists.

PAC Code 620 - Indicators:

(No priority indicators listed for FY01.)

PAC Code 610 – Indicator:

- Number of individuals adopting practices that insure safe water

PAC Code 440 – Indicators:

- Number of individuals implementing personal health protection practices appropriate for their life cycle stage.
- Number of persons who report practice changes related to safety.

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