Household Hazardous Waste

Leftover household products that contain corrosive, toxic, ignitable, or reactive ingredients are considered to be "household hazardous waste" or "HHW." Products, such as paints, cleaners, oils, batteries, and pesticides that contain potentially hazardous ingredients require special care when you dispose of them. Improper disposal of household hazardous wastes can include pouring them down the drain, on the ground, into storm sewers, or in some cases putting them out with the trash. The dangers of such disposal methods might not be immediately obvious, but improper disposal of these wastes can pollute the environment and pose a threat to human health. Many communities in the United States offer a variety of options for conveniently and safely managing HHW.

To avoid the potential risks associated with household hazardous wastes, it is important that people always monitor the use, storage, and disposal of products with potentially hazardous substances in their homes. Below are some tips for individuals to follow in their own homes:

- Use and store products containing hazardous substances carefully to prevent any accidents at home. Never store hazardous products in food containers; keep them in their original containers and never remove labels. Corroding containers, however, require special handling. Call your local hazardous materials official or fire department for instructions.
- When leftovers remain, never mix HHW with other products. Incompatible products might react, ignite, or explode, and contaminated HHW might become unrecyclable.
- Remember to follow any instructions for use and disposal provided on product labels.

Certain types of HHW have the potential to cause physical injury to sanitation workers, contaminate septic tanks or wastewater treatment systems if poured down drains or toilets, and present hazards to children and pets if left around the house. Some communities do allow disposal of HHW in trash, particularly those areas that do not yet have collection programs. Call your local environmental, health, or solid waste agency for instructions on proper disposal. Follow their instructions and also read product labels for disposal directions to reduce the risk of products exploding, igniting, leaking, mixing with other chemicals, or posing other hazards on the way to a disposal facility. Even empty containers of HHW can pose hazards because of the residual chemicals that might remain.

Bristol Hill Landfill in Volney accepts HHW at no charge to Oswego County residents. For more information including drop off dates please go to: http://www.co.oswego.ny.us/dsw/documents/2014%20dates.pdf

If you live in Onondaga County visit OCRRA’s website: https://ocrra.org/about-ocrra
Power Strips and Daisy Chains

The supply of readily available electrical outlets is inadequate in some buildings, especially older ones. To meet power supply needs, extension cords or surge protected power strips are often interconnected, or "daisy chained," to readily provide more outlets and/or to reach greater distances. Another common solution is to create a "mixed daisy chain," interconnecting extension cords and power strips. However, interconnecting these devices is a violation of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations and the National Electrical Code because doing so can cause them to become overloaded, leading to their failure and a possible fire. Daisy chains and mixed daisy chains constitute some of the most common violations identified during safety inspections.

OSHA regulations require that conductors and electrical equipment be used in accordance with the conditions under which they are approved by a recognized testing organization (29 CFR 1910.303(a)). Most power strips are approved for providing power to a maximum of four or six individual items; however, when multiple power strips are interconnected, the one directly connected to the building outlet is often supplying power to far more than the approved number. This electrical current overload can result in a fire or can cause a circuit breaker to trip, de-energizing computers and other equipment throughout the area. The risk is magnified when another outlet in the same wall or floor receptacle is also overloaded in a similar fashion. When other outlets on the same circuit are also overloaded, the risk increases.

Extension cords are sometimes used to energize power strips in locations far from outlets. Because electrical resistance increases with increased power cord length, interconnecting cords increases the total resistance and resultant heat generation. This creates an additional risk of equipment failure and fire, particularly when paper and other combustible materials are in contact with the wires.

Several safe solutions exist. In many cases, a power strip energized by an extension cord or another power strip can simply be replaced by a power strip with a power cord of adequate length to reach an outlet. Alternatively, desks and associated equipment may be moved so they are closer to existing outlets. Other times, use of a power strip that is better able to accommodate bulkier transformer plugs solves the problem.

Several factors should be considered when selecting an appropriate surge protector. Since models vary in the amount of current that they are rated to safely carry, it is important to consider the amperage requirements of the devices to be energized. Models vary in length of power cord, typically ranging from three to fifteen feet. Choose one whose length is most appropriate for reaching the intended room outlet. Avoid having too much excess cord, and make sure the surge protector is set on its base. Some have swivel plugs which makes them easier to connect to the outlet, and helps to protect the plug and cord from damage. Check each surge protector to make sure it is in good condition for use.
Power Cord Safety

Power cords on electrical appliances that are moved frequently receive a lot of abuse. These include vacuum cleaners, floor polishers, power tools and other portable appliances. Often, the damage occurs at the plug. Damaged and ungrounded power cords pose serious hazards to users of the appliance including electrical shock and risk of fire. Missing ground prongs on power cord plugs usually result from users pulling on the cord to remove the plug from the outlet instead of handling the plug directly. In some cases, the plug may be pulled from the wire covering, exposing the inner wires to damage. Power cords can become frayed or damaged from heavy use, age, or excessive current flow through the wiring.

When a power cord is damaged, the appliance should be removed from service and the cord replaced as soon as possible to reduce the risk of electrical shock, electrocution or fire.

Cord damage can also result when the cord is pinched, caught between or punctured by heavy objects such as legs on a desk. This damage could lead to a short circuit and result in a fire. Also, cords placed under stress, such as when a heavy appliance is hung by its cord, could eventually cause damage to the cord or plug.

Congratulations and Happy Retirement to John Sawyer!

John started working at SUNY Oswego on September 3rd, 1977 and recently retired after 25 years in the Environmental Health & Safety Department. John will now have lots of free time to enjoy his many hobbies and spend time with his family. We thank him for his dedication and wish him many happy and healthy years!

Also retiring in May after over 30 years of service were Electrician Doug Townsend and Plumbing Supervisor Pat Galvin. Best wishes to both!
Mosquitos...

Some mosquitoes are vectors for diseases. This means they can transmit diseases from one human or animal to another. Typically, the diseases are caused by viruses or tiny parasites. For example, a mosquito that bites an infected human or animal can pick up a virus along with the blood meal. The mosquito and virus do not harm one another but the virus reproduces inside the mosquito. Later, the mosquito can pass the viruses to other humans when biting them.

The best protection from mosquito-transmitted diseases is to keep them from biting you!

- **Use an insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus.** Always follow all directions and precautions on the product label.
- **Wear long sleeves and long pants.** Mosquitoes can bite through thin clothing. Spraying repellent on clothing can help.
- **Be aware of peak mosquito hours.** Dusk to dawn are peak biting hours, but some mosquitoes bite all day. Consider staying indoors when mosquitoes are most active.
- **Fix your screens.** Mosquitoes can enter your home through rips and tears in screens and open windows.
- **Drain standing water.** Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water in flower pots, buckets, bird baths, clogged gutters, and yard debris.

Old tires containing standing water are a significant breeding ground for mosquitoes! Oswego County residents can get rid of old tires at the county solid waste transfer stations between 8 a.m. and noon on Saturday, June 14 which has been designated as a Tire Amnesty Day. Residents can safely dispose of unwanted tires and reduce mosquito-breeding habitats. The normal tire fee will be waived.

The events are sponsored by State Senator Patty Ritchie and the Oswego County Legislature. The purpose of the program is to reduce the amount of waste tires and help prevent the spread of mosquitoes which can carry Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) and other diseases.

Check out the beautiful new building at Rice Creek. It is open M-F 9 am-4:30 pm and on Saturdays 9 am-3 pm. There are FREE programs on most Saturdays, and trails are open during daylight hours. Parking is available by the main building and near the gate on Thompson Road. For more information call 312-6677 or visit [http://www.oswego.edu/academics/opportunities/rice_creek_field_station.html](http://www.oswego.edu/academics/opportunities/rice_creek_field_station.html)

**INK AND TONER CARTRIDGE RECYCLING!**

Environmental Health & Safety will take your empty ink and toner cartridges for recycling. You may send them to us through Campus Mail addressed to: EH & S, 110 Lee Hall. You may also drop them off to us or call us at 3157 for pick up. What ever you do...

**DO NOT THROW THEM IN THE GARBAGE!** Thanks!
Ergonomic Assessments
FYI: Christine Body has been doing ergonomic assessments since 1996 and is available to do them here on campus. She can be reached at 312-2770 and would be happy to assist you with any questions or issues.

QUIT SMOKING!!!
Faculty and staff members may contact the New York Smokers’ Quitline, 1-866-NYQUITS (1-866-697-8487) or visit www.nysmokefree.com. Oswego Health also sponsors a free online quit-smoking program with support from certified cessation counselors; call 349-5513 to register.

MARTY SAYS: Hey! Remember last month’s newsletter about TICKS??? Well, guess who has Lyme disease??? None other than yours truly, Marty! I feel fine but I’m on antibiotics. My Vet said that a LOT of dogs have tested positive for Lyme disease this year. Please make sure you have your furry friends tested! Thanks!

June Word Search
For a chance to win a great prize, complete the Word Search and send it via e-mail to lisa.drake@oswego.edu OR through Campus Mail: Lisa Drake, 110 Lee Hall. Make sure to put your name on it! The winner for May was Carol Bullock! Look for: Hazardous Waste, Corrosive, Toxic, Ignitable, Reactive, Storm Sewers, Environment, Power Strips, Daisy Chains, Electrical Outlets, OSHA, Conductors, Current, Extension Cords, Surge Protector, Appliances, Shock, Fire, Mosquitos, Vectors, and Virus.

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