

University of Missouri Extension

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Stored Waste Abatement Program: SWAP Your Waste

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Coordinator guide

From trash to treasure

It is better to carefully use up unwanted household hazardous products than to dispose of them in the trash or down the drain. But if you do not wish to use the products or cannot use them, what other options are there besides disposal? One option is to share these products with responsible adults in your neighborhood, church or civic group.

The Stored Waste Abatement Program, or SWAP, links people with usable but unwanted products with others who would use those products.

Note

SWAP does not include pharmaceuticals, industrial or commercial hazardous wastes, radioactive wastes, or banned or restricted pesticides

As a SWAP coordinator, you will not be handling the products, but will organize the SWAP so that the participants exchange products directly with one another. By volunteering to coordinate a SWAP, you are educating people and helping to protect our environment.

How to organize a SWAP

- **Educate yourself about the health and environmental problems concerning household hazardous products**
Two ways to increase your awareness are to study the *Guide to Hazardous Products Around the Home*, available through HHWP or to take our course entitled "From Awareness to Action!"
- **Copy the enclosed SWAP Home Inventory Form and Home Inventory Instructions front-to-back**
Distribute one to each member of your group. The SWAP Home Inventory Form has safety guidelines to follow while undertaking the inventory of household hazardous products.
- **Inform the members of your group about the problem of household hazardous waste, how SWAP is a part of the solution, and the SWAP procedures**
Carefully read aloud to the group members the safety guidelines presented on the SWAP Home Inventory Instructions. Strongly emphasize safe handling, storage, and transportation of household hazardous products to the members of your group.
- **Set a specific deadline for accepting the SWAP Home Inventory Forms and a specific time period during which the exchanges may occur**
We suggest that the exchange period lasts no longer than a month in order that the information remains valid. If the interest is great, the SWAP can be repeated.
- **Determine how the members will return the SWAP form to you**
Some possibilities include providing a stamped and addressed envelope or collecting the forms at the next meeting.
- **Compile the list of materials available for exchange by the members of the group**
There are a variety of ways to compile this list and the best method may depend upon the size of your group. One

way is to list every participant's name and phone number and the material they would like to share.

- **Display this list in a prominent place or distribute it to the group members**

Those who wish to acquire these products can note the name and phone number of members having products to share.

- **Refer participants to HHWP for advice on how to secure and hold the products not chosen until another SWAP or a household hazardous waste collection event occurs**

HHWP would be happy to answer any questions you may have. Thanks for coordinating and participating in a SWAP!

SWAP — Home Inventory instructions

Please read carefully

SWAP is a program designed to link individuals who have leftover hazardous products with others who would use those products. It is good to know that household hazardous products you no longer want may find a home with someone who will use them up, rather than going down the drain or into the trash. SWAP does not include pharmaceuticals, industrial or commercial hazardous wastes, radioactive wastes, or banned or restricted pesticides.

Identifying household hazardous waste

Hazardous products may be toxic, corrosive, explosive, or flammable. Many products used around the home are hazardous and therefore difficult to dispose of properly. If a hazardous product is used up, there is no hazardous waste to dispose of. Improper disposal of hazardous wastes poses a threat to our health and the environment.

Be part of a SWAP!

Inventory your home for unwanted but usable household hazardous products that you are willing to share with others. The SWAP Home Inventory Form (below) lists common household hazardous products. If you have products not mentioned on the form that you wish to share, please note them in the section called "Other." Record the brand name and the amount of the hazardous product you have on the form. While surveying your home, record on a different sheet of paper any products you wish to receive to compare later with the available products. Return the Home Inventory Form to the SWAP coordinator. The coordinator will compile a list of products available for exchange and each owner's name and phone number. Check the list for available products you may wish to use up.

When inventorying your home, please follow these important safety guidelines:

- Do not eat, drink, or smoke while conducting your inventory. Traces of hazardous chemicals can be carried from hand to mouth. If the product is flammable, smoking may start a fire.
- If you find a product that is leaking and you have touched it, wash your hands immediately. Then wear heavy rubber or nitrile gloves for handling. Place the leaking product in its original container upright into a plastic bucket with a tight-fitting lid surrounded by plenty of clay-based absorbent (such as kitty litter) which will absorb the leaking product. On the outside of the plastic container write the contents, amount, and date, plus the words "Danger" or "Poison."
- Wash your hands thoroughly when you have finished the SWAP Home Inventory Form.
- Check to see if your hazardous products are stored out of the reach of children and pets.
- Be sure that flammables are stored away from sources of sparks, heat, and flames. Check that aerosol cans are stored away from high-temperature areas.

Consider these points when selecting products to exchange:

Only exchange products in their original containers with labels that clearly identify the contents and safe use instructions. Do not exchange products in containers that are leaking.

- Never exchange a product that has been mixed.
- Do not exchange pesticides without contacting your county extension agent to determine if your pesticide is now considered banned or restricted.

When you exchange household hazardous products:

- Have lids and caps tightly sealed.
- Beware of aerosol cans without caps. Package them with newspaper around the tops.
- Keep combustibles out of direct sunlight and away from heat sources.
- Place incompatible products in separate boxes. Flammables, corrosives, and poisons should all be separated. The product label will indicate its category.
- Place the products in your car trunk or be certain there is good ventilation if you transport them in the passenger compartment. Do not smoke while transporting hazardous materials.
- Wash hands thoroughly after handling products.

Table 1
SWAP Home Inventory form

Product	Brand name	Amount
Living room		
Furniture polish		
Kitchen/bathroom		
Drain cleaner		
Oven cleaner		
Floor cleaner		
Metal cleaner		
Disinfectant		
Ammonia		
Nail polish/remover		
Laundry room		
Bleach		
Laundry detergent		
Workbench		
Caulking materials		
Paint		
Varnish		
Paint thinner		
Furniture stripper		
Glue		
Garage		

Your comments are essential for improving this activity. Please copy this form and include any additional comments on the back. Please return the completed form to HHWP at the address below. Thank you for your time and comments.

Return form to: Household Hazardous Waste Project, 1031 E. Battlefield, Suite 214, Springfield, Mo. 65807

Evaluation form

What was the number of participants in this activity?

What is the name of the group or organization that used this activity?

Were the Coordinator Guidelines sufficiently clear and complete for coordinating this activity?

What additional information do you think is necessary?

Were the Home Inventory instructions sufficiently clear and complete for the participants in this activity?

What additional information do you think is necessary?

How did the participants respond to the SWAP?

How many products were exchanged in your SWAP?

What changes would you recommend to improve this activity?

Would you recommend this activity to other groups?

Why or why not?

Your name:

Organization's name:

Address:

Your daytime telephone:

The *Guide to Hazardous Products Around the Home* is a personal action manual for protecting your health and the environment. This comprehensive, 178-page handbook explains product ingredients, safety issues, disposal, recycling outlets, safer product alternatives, and more! Promoted by Greenpeace, the United Nations Environmental Programme, *50 Simple Things You can do to Save the Earth* and *The Green Consumer*. The *Guide* was written by the Household Hazardous Waste Project, winner of the 1991 President's Environment and Conservation Challenge Award. To order this guide, send \$9.95 (Missouri residents add 69 cents sales tax) to: HHWP, 1031 E. Battlefield, Suite 214, Springfield, Mo. 65807.

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Related MU Extension publications

- WM5001, What Your Home Haz: A Household Hazardous Waste Game
<http://extension.missouri.edu/p/WM5001>
- WM5002, Home Hazardous Product Survey
<http://extension.missouri.edu/p/WM5002>

Order publications online at <http://extension.missouri.edu/explore/shop/> or call toll-free 800-292-0969.



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