

# Dangers in Your Trash

A Guide to Doing it right in Lawrence and Mercer Counties



Hazardous wastes are sometimes disposed of improperly by pouring wastes down the drain, on the ground, or putting them out with the trash. Improperly discarded hazardous wastes have the potential to cause physical injury to sanitation workers, contaminate septic tanks or waste water treatment systems and present hazards to children and pets.

## How to know if it is dangerous or a safety hazard.

When getting ready to throw something away stop and think is this potentially toxic, flammable, corrosive, or reactive. If you answered yes or even maybe to just one of these do not just toss it in the trash. Look at the list below on how to properly dispose of the material.

## What not to throw away:

**Eye glasses** - these can break in your normal trash and cause a sharps hazard.

- Many eye care chains take old prescription glasses and donated to people in need.

**Cleaners** - Do not pour these down the drain or flush in the toilet to keep from contaminating ground water.

- Things such as oven and toilet bowl cleaners, bleach, disinfectants, and etc. should be taken to a HHW to a special collection event, or go to [www.earth911.com](http://www.earth911.com) for a list in your area if an event isn't available.

**Ink/toner Cartridges** - Ink that might still be left in the cartage could leak into the ground causing contamination. The plastic that makes up the casing is recyclable and may take up to 1,000 years to break down

- If you collect your empty ink cartages staples and [recyclingplace.org](http://recyclingplace.org) will pay you up to \$2 for your old empty ink cartages where they get repurposed.

**Illuminated tritium "Exit" sign** - These signs do not run on batteries or on electricity they rely on radioactive gas referred to as "tritium". These signs are not to be taken off relocated or other wise tampered with unless you are a licensed personal.

- To dispose of these signs you must be a manufacturer, distributor, licensed radioactive waste broker or licensed low-level radioactive waste disposal facility.

**Lithium Batteries** - When thrown in the household trash, batteries end up in landfills. As the battery casing corrodes, chemicals leach into the soil and make their way into our water supply. lithium can cause landfill fires that can burn underground for years releasing toxic chemicals.

- Keep lithium batteries out of recycle and trash cans. These batteries may be taken to places such as Best Buy, Staples, Lowes, and Home Depot, to be recycled properly

**Smoke Detectors** - Many smoke detectors contain radioactive material and should not be landfilled or placed in the recycling stream. You can return old smoke detectors to the original manufacturer, whose address should be found on the back of the detector.

**Electronics** - Electronics such as computers, televisions, and cell phones contain a variety of potentially hazardous materials. Electronics are recyclable. Check out our websites and Facebook page for our "Electronics Recycling Guide" which is updated annually. You can refer to our Electronics fact sheet for additional information about Electronics.

## Eye Glasses:

- Walmart Vision Center
- New Wilmington Eye Care
- America's Best Contacts & Glasses



Recycling/Solid Waste Department