

MORE INFO

- [Environmental Protection Agency](#)
- [City of Abilene Environmental Recycling Center](#)
- [City of Abilene - Waste Disposal Information](#)
- [Texas 8-1-1 Call Before You Dig](#)
- [Texas Commission on Environmental Quality](#)
- [National Municipal Stormwater Alliance](#)
- [National Assoc. of Clean Water Agencies](#)



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HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Save Our Waterways
Clean Water, Healthy Life

Stormwater Services Division

WHAT IS TOXIC?

Hazardous waste is any chemical or by product that can harm the environment and any living thing that gets exposed to it. These are produced by manufacturing, agricultural processes and some household products. The latter is the most overlooked and are sitting under your sink, in your basement or garage. When you throw old batteries in the trash or dump oil down a drain, you've contributed to adding hazardous waste to the environment and water supply.

AREAS OF CONCERN

Mishandling or inappropriate storage: Containers exposed to rain without lids or overhead cover, containers in poor condition (rusty, bloated, dented) can leak. Unlabeled containers can be misused and neglected. Batteries stored outside increase the chance for leaks from cracked casings and terminal corrosion. Small quantities of any of these toxic chemicals destroy aquatic life and plants. They are also poisonous to humans. Store and handle properly by keeping containers under protective cover with secured lids. Properly label and inspect containers to make sure they are in good condition. Store used batteries inside where corrosion spills may be contained.

Improper fuel activities: Fuel release occurs from overfilling tanks, leaving a fueling station without removing the pump handle from the car, topping off and filling inappropriate containers, or issues surrounding the emergency shut-off switch (human or mechanical errors). Monitor tank filling activities to avoid overfilling. Businesses should install and

DID YOU KNOW...

- Most car batteries contain 18 lbs of lead and a gallon of sulfuric acid - both are hazardous wastes.
- Batteries from electric cars are heavy in metals and minerals such as cobalt, nickel and lithium. All are toxic to extract from the ground. Currently there are no environmentally safe ways of recycling lithium-ion batteries.
- Flushing fuel spills into storm sewers pollutes Abilene's creeks and lakes.
- Hazardous waste is reactive, ignitable, corrosive and toxic. Reactive waste can cause explosions when heated, mixed with water or compressed. Ignitable wastes have flash points of less than 140 degrees F. Corrosive waste can corrode metal containers.
- Toxic wastes contain mercury, cadmium, arsenic, lead and if thrown in the landfill or sewers, will contaminate the soil and water.



maintain overflow prevention equipment. Install automatic closing hose nozzle valves to prevent spills. Clearly mark the shut-off switch and train your employees as to its location and use. If you use degreasers and solvents to remove buildup or to wash parts, these are highly toxic and flammable. Be sure to clean on an asphalt or concrete surface for easy clean-up and to keep from contaminating the soil and water underground. If you install a parts wash system indoors do not plumb it to drain outside onto the ground or into a drain system

Handle spills properly: Most spills occur during transport to and from storage receptacles. Spills are often mishandled by flushing with water to a storm drain or are left unattended and are carried into the environment when it rains. Spills will happen. Do NOT flush spills away with water.

Contain them immediately before they reach a storm drain and spread to the creeks or lakes OR soak into the ground. Also do NOT put yourself at risk. Assess the situation and make the best choice available to you. Immediately stop the spread of liquids by using absorbent materials to contain. Immediately block off nearby drains (storm, sewer or sanitary). It is VERY expensive to decontaminate the inside of storm sewer pipes and clean a contaminated body of water than it is to buy spill containment material. Always wear appropriate PPE and immediately contact the fire department to report the spill.

Dispose of hazardous substances properly. Hazardous substances dumped on the ground, down a drain or throwing them into the trash has serious consequences for everyone and can be costly in more than one way. Recycle or reuse where you are able or dispose of them using a licensed and bonded company.