California Paint Stewardship Program

Each year about 800 million gallons of architectural paint is sold in the United States. Did you know that about 10 percent goes unused and is available for recycling?

California’s paint stewardship law requires the paint manufacturing industry to develop a financially sustainable and environmentally responsible program to manage postconsumer architectural paint.

The program includes education about buying the right amount of paint, tips for using up remaining paint, and setting up convenient recycling locations throughout the state.

Paint manufacturers established PaintCare, a nonprofit organization, to run paint stewardship programs in states with applicable laws.

PaintCare Products

These products have a fee when you buy them and are accepted for free at drop-off sites:

- Interior and exterior architectural paints: latex, acrylic, water-based, alkyd, oil-based, enamel (including textured coatings)
- Deck coatings, floor paints (including elastomeric)
- Primers, sealers, undercoaters
- Stains
- Shellacs, lacquers, varnishes, urethanes (single component)
- Waterproofing concrete/masonry/wood sealers and repellents (not tar or bitumen-based)
- Metal coatings, rust preventatives
- Field and lawn paints

Warning: Leaking, unlabeled, and empty containers are not accepted at drop-off sites.

Non-PaintCare Products

- Paint thinners, mineral spirits, solvents
- Aerosol paints (spray cans)
- Auto and marine paints
- Art and craft paints
- Caulk, epoxies, glues, adhesives
- Paint additives, colorants, tints, resins
- Wood preservatives (containing pesticides)
- Roof patch and repair
- Asphalt, tar and bitumen-based products
- 2-component coatings
- Deck cleaners
- Traffic and road marking paints
- Industrial Maintenance (IM) coatings
- Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) (shop application) paints and finishes

For information about recycling and proper disposal of non-PaintCare products, please contact your garbage hauler, local environmental health agency, household hazardous waste program, or public works department.

CA-BREN-0820
What Happens to the Paint?
PaintCare makes sure that your leftover paint is remixed into recycled paint, used as a fuel, made into other products, or is properly disposed if no other beneficial use for it can be found.

Who Can Use the Program?
Households can bring as much latex or oil-based paint as the site is willing to accept.

To use the PaintCare program for oil-based paint, a business must qualify as an exempt generator under federal and any analogous state hazardous waste generator rules. Please visit www.paintcare.org/VSQG for more information on exempt generator rules. If your business does not qualify as an exempt generator, it will not be able to use the program for oil-based paint, but it can still use the program for latex products.

Large Volume Pickup
If you have at least 200 gallons of paint to recycle at your business or home, ask about our free pickup service. Please visit paintcare.org or call for more details or to request an appointment.

PaintCare Fee
PaintCare is funded by a fee paid by paint manufacturers for each can of paint they sell in the state. Manufacturers pass the fee to retailers, who then apply it to the price of paint. Stores can choose whether or not to show the fee on their receipts. The fee is based on the size of the container as follows:

- $0.00  Half pint or smaller
- $0.35  Larger than half pint up to smaller than 1 gallon
- $0.75  1 gallon
- $1.60  Larger than 1 gallon up to 5 gallons

Not a Deposit
The fee is not a deposit — it is part of the purchase price. The fee is used to fund the costs of running the program, including recycling, public education, staffing, and other expenses.

Contact Us
To learn more or find a drop-off site, please visit www.paintcare.org or call (855) PAINT09.