The District’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.

District of Columbia Paint Stewardship Program

Each year about 780 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?

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PaintCare Products

These products have fees 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

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.
What Happens to the Paint?
PaintCare will make sure that your leftover paint is remixed into recycled paint, used as a fuel, made into other products or properly disposed.

Who Can Use the Program?
People bringing paint from their homes can bring as much latex or oil-based paint as the site is willing to accept.

Businesses (painting contractors and others) can use this program with one restriction: If your business produces more than 220 pounds (about 20-30 gallons) of hazardous waste per month, you may use the drop-off sites for your latex paint only but not for your oil-based paint. Contact PaintCare to learn more about this restriction.

Large Volume Pick-Up
If you have at least 200 gallons of paint to recycle at your business or home, ask about our free pick-up service. Please 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 District. 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. Fees are based on the size of the container as follows:

- $0.00  Half pint or smaller
- $0.45  Larger than half pint and smaller than 1 gallon
- $0.95  1 gallon up to 2 gallons
- $1.95  Larger than 2 gallons up to 5 gallons

Not a Deposit
The fee is not a deposit — it is part of the purchase price. The fees are used to pay the costs of running the program: 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) 724-6809.