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Paint Recycling Program Launches in Washington State

Ten years in the making, the new program makes it easy and safe to recycle leftover paint

SEATTLE – April 1, 2021 – A new paint recycling program beginning today in the state of Washington allows households and businesses to recycle leftover paint, stain, and varnish conveniently and sustainably. The program is operated by [PaintCare](https://www.paintcare.org), a nonprofit organization created by the paint industry through the American Coatings Association (ACA) to manage leftover paint in states that have enacted paint stewardship laws. PaintCare will provide more than 200 drop-off sites across Washington, which include paint retail stores and locally managed government facilities.

“There has been tremendous effort to create a paint recycling program in Washington state,” said Jeremy Jones, West Coast Program Manager, PaintCare. “We’ve been building and running paint recycling programs in other states for more than 10 years and will leverage this expertise in Washington to deliver a program that meets the needs of households and businesses.”

Washington’s paint recycling program was made possible under the paint stewardship law ([SHB 1652](#)), which was passed by the Washington State Legislature, and signed into law by Gov. Jay Inslee in 2019. The law ensures that everyone who produces, sells, and uses paint work together to manage its entire life cycle.

How It Works

A small fee—called the PaintCare fee—on the sale of new paint funds all aspects of the program including paint collection, transportation, processing, and public education. The PaintCare fee in Washington is the same as in neighboring Oregon and varies by container size: \$0.00 for half pint or smaller; \$0.45 for larger than half pint up to smaller than one gallon; \$0.95 for one gallon up to two gallons; \$1.95 for larger than two gallons up to five gallons.

PaintCare makes it convenient to recycle leftover paint by partnering with local government facilities and paint retailers near residential neighborhoods and open at normal business hours. These locations make it easy for households and businesses to find their nearest drop-off site by visiting PaintCare’s [online site locator](#).

Most PaintCare sites accept both latex and oil-based architectural paint products, including paints, stains, and varnishes. Paint must be dropped off in its original container with its original manufacturer’s label. A full list of products accepted by the program is available on [PaintCare’s website](#).

All sites accept a minimum of five gallons of paint from each customer, some sites may accept more. Those planning to drop off paint are encouraged to call ahead to ensure the site can accept the amount and type of paint they want to recycle and confirm the site's hours of operation.

Businesses, organizations, and households with 200 gallons of paint or more to recycle may request a free pickup at their location. Some restrictions apply. More information and a request form can be found on [PaintCare's website](#).

Washington's program follows similar paint stewardship laws in nine other states and the District of Columbia, all built on a model mediated by the Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) over a decade ago. Passage of the Washington paint stewardship law was made possible by a collaboration among multiple stakeholders, including Washington's Department of Ecology (Ecology), PSI, the Northwest Product Stewardship Council (NWPSC), and Zero Waste Washington. The new program is expected to manage more than 1.3 million gallons of paint in its first year.

"We are so pleased that paint recycling is now a reality for Washington State," said Megan Warfield, Ecology's Paint Program Lead. "This program is a big step forward for product stewardship in the state. It's also a testament to the dedication and perseverance of a diverse set of Washington stakeholders from government, industry, and nonprofit communities."

It is estimated that about 10% of all household paint goes unused. When dumped in the trash or down the drain, leftover paint can contaminate the environment. Although most leftover paint can be reused, recycled into new paint, or repurposed into other products, much of it is trashed because people do not know where to take it or it's not convenient.

"The PaintCare program is an excellent example of producer responsibility in action and what can be achieved when producers engage with governments, recyclers, and others in a collaborative process," said Scott Cassel, Chief Executive Officer and Founder, PSI. "Going forward, the Washington program will divert millions of gallons of paint from landfills, collectively save local governments across the state millions of dollars each year, increase environmental benefits, and boost the green economy."

PaintCare helps ensure the "highest, best use" for paint collected in the program, including giving away good quality material as-is, recycling it, or putting it to another beneficial use. Most of the paint PaintCare receives is latex-based and can be remixed into recycled paint products by processors. To date, PaintCare has processed more than 46 million gallons of paint nationally and saved state and local governments millions of dollars.

High-resolution images and video from the PaintCare program can be [downloaded here](#).

Visit <http://www.paintcare.org/WA> for more information about the PaintCare program or to find a nearby drop-off site.

About PaintCare

PaintCare is committed to making it easy and convenient for households and businesses to recycle leftover paint in states with paint stewardship laws. A nonprofit organization created by paint manufacturers, PaintCare sets up drop-off locations for leftover paint, arranges for recycling and proper disposal, and conducts public education. More than 46 million gallons of paint, stain, and varnish have been managed by PaintCare in 9 states and the District of Columbia, with a new program launching in New York in 2022. For additional information, visit www.paintcare.org, like us on [Facebook](#), and follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) @WeRecyclePaint.

About [Department of Ecology](#)

The Department of Ecology is Washington's environmental protection agency, established in 1970 to preserve and protect our state's land, air, and water today and for future generations.

About the [Northwest Product Stewardship Council \(NWPSC\)](#)

The NWPSC is a coalition of government organizations in Washington and Oregon that operates as an unincorporated association of members, which works to integrate product stewardship principles into the policy and economic structures of the Pacific Northwest.

About the [Product Stewardship Institute \(PSI\)](#)

PSI is a national nonprofit bringing diverse stakeholders together to reduce the health and environmental impacts of consumer products with a strong focus on sustainable end-of-life management.

About [Zero Waste Washington \(ZWW\)](#)

Zero Waste Washington drives policy change for a healthy and waste-free world. We envision a just, equitable, and sustainable future where we all produce, consume, and reuse responsibly.