

Information for Painting Contractors

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How do paint stewardship laws affect painting contractors?

PaintCare

PaintCare is a nonprofit organization established by the American Coatings Association to implement manufacturer-led paint stewardship programs in states that pass paint stewardship laws. PaintCare currently operates programs in California, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Maine, Minnesota, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington, and is developing programs for Illinois and Maryland.

Paint Drop-Off Sites

The primary requirement of paint stewardship laws is for paint manufacturers to set up paint drop-off sites at retailers and other locations where households, businesses, and other organizations can take postconsumer (leftover) architectural paint, free of charge. Most drop-off sites are paint and hardware stores; others are waste transfer stations, recycling centers, landfills, and household hazardous waste (HHW) facilities. Participation as a drop-off site is voluntary. There are more than 2,400 drop-off sites across all PaintCare programs. To find a drop-off location, visit www.paintcare.org/drop-off-sites.

Fee and Funding

As required by laws in PaintCare jurisdictions, the program is funded by a fee (known as the PaintCare fee) that must be added by manufacturers to the wholesale price of all architectural paint sold in the state, including paint sold in stores and online. This fee is paid by manufacturers to PaintCare to fund program operations including paint collection and recycling, consumer education, and program administration. Displaying the fee on receipts is optional for retailers; however, PaintCare encourages retailers to show the fee to inform consumers about the program. (See reverse for complete listing of fees by state.)

Recommendations for Contractors

Preparing Estimates

When estimating jobs, contractors should take the PaintCare fee into account by checking with suppliers to make sure their quotes for paint products include the fee.

Pass Fee to Customers

PaintCare suggests that painting contractors pass on the fee to customers in order to recoup the fee they pay. Tell customers that quotes include the PaintCare fee and that the fee funds a statewide paint recycling program.

Convenient Paint Drop-Off Sites

With paint drop-off sites conveniently located throughout PaintCare states, anyone can drop off their leftover paint year-round. Many contractors report the benefits of clearing out their storage spaces and no longer stockpiling paint. Contractors now have an answer for customers who ask what to do with old paint they no longer want; they can recommend that they use PaintCare drop-off sites too.

Most drop-off sites take 5 gallons per customer per trip, though some take more. All retail drop-off sites take paint from businesses, although some transfer stations and household hazardous waste programs only serve households. Always call a drop-off site ahead of visiting to make sure they have space for your volume and to confirm they take paint from businesses.

Pickup Service for Large Volumes

Painting contractors with at least 100 gallons of leftover paint to recycle may qualify to have their paint picked up by PaintCare for free. To learn more about this service or to request an appointment, visit www.paintcare.org/pickup or call (855) PAINT09.

Business Limits

With the exception of businesses in Illinois, 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/business-limits 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. (Non-exempt generators may use the pickup service in New York. Contact PaintCare for details.)

What Are the Fee Amounts?

The PaintCare fee is based on container size and varies from one program to another:

	Larger than half pint up to smaller than 1 gallon	1–2 gallons	Larger than 2 gallons up to 5 gallons
California	\$0.30	\$0.65	\$1.50
Colorado	\$0.35	\$0.75	\$1.60
Connecticut	\$0.35	\$0.75	\$1.60
District of Columbia	\$0.30	\$0.70	\$1.60
Maine* (until 9/30/25)	\$0.35	\$0.75	\$1.60
Maine* (after 10/1/25)	\$0.50	\$1.10	\$2.00
Minnesota	\$0.49	\$0.99	\$1.99
New York	\$0.45	\$0.95	\$1.95
Oregon	\$0.45	\$0.95	\$1.95
Rhode Island	\$0.35	\$0.75	\$1.60
Vermont	\$0.65	\$1.35	\$2.45
Washington	\$0.45	\$0.95	\$1.95

*A fee increase will take place in Maine on October 1, 2025.

What Products Are Covered?

The products accepted by the PaintCare program are the same products that have a fee when they are sold. PaintCare products include interior and exterior architectural coatings sold in containers of five gallons or less. They do not include aerosol coatings, industrial maintenance (IM), original equipment manufacturer (OEM), or specialty coatings.

PAINTCARE PRODUCTS

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

NON-PAINTCARE PRODUCTS

- Paint thinners, mineral spirits, solvents
- Aerosol coatings
- Auto and marine paints
- Art and craft paints
- Caulking compounds, 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