



# GOT LEFTOVER PAINT?

## THE SIX-POINT PROGRAM FOR LEFTOVER PAINT

Too much leftover paint ends up in our nation's landfills, because people needlessly throw it away. You can help. You are the key to reducing the amount of paint that ends up in our landfills by following these steps:

- 1. Buy Only The Paint You Need** -- First, always buy only what you need. That way, you reduce the chance of having any paint leftover in the first place. It's the same idea behind reusing grocery bags, or eliminating excess packaging. When you avoid creating waste at the start, you're practicing "source reduction." It's a smart way to help the environment!
- 2. Store Paint So it Lasts for Years** - You don't throw away the loaf of bread just because you used a few slices. You wrap it up and store it, so you can enjoy it again later. It's the same with paint. Did you know that when properly stored, paint can last for years? Just cover the opening with plastic wrap, and make sure the lid fits securely so the paint doesn't leak. Then, and here's the key step: store the paint can upside down. The paint will create a tight seal around the lid, keeping the paint fresh until you need it again.
- 3. Use Up All Your Paint** - Now that you know how to keep your leftover paint fresh for years, don't forget about it. Use it up! Leftover paint can be used on touch-up jobs and smaller projects. You can also blend and mix smaller quantities of similar colors of latex paint to use as a primer on larger jobs, or jobs where the final finish is not critical. (Always make sure you read and follow all label instructions when applying paint.)
- 4. Recycle the Empty Paint Can** – Once you have used all the paint, recycle metal cans at your community's recycling center.
- 5. Donate or Exchange Your Paint** - If you just can't use your leftover paint, donate it to community groups, theater groups, schools, churches and others who need or want it.
- 6. As a Last Resort...Dispose of Paint Properly** - Everyone should be able to save, use up, donate or exchange leftover paint. If as a last resort you need to dispose of your leftover paint, make sure you do it properly.



Dry leftover latex-based paint and discard it. Ask your paint store if they sell a latex paint hardener, to make it quick and easy. Or, let your leftover latex paint air dry away from children and pets, preferably in a well-ventilated area like a barn or garage. One method is to pour the latex paint into a paper box or bag, and add absorbent material such as shredded newspaper and kitty litter to speed drying. Then throw the dried paint away with your normal trash.

Remember, solvent-based paint (oil-based, alkyd, anything that requires mineral spirits for clean-up) is considered hazardous waste, wet or dry. Please bring all solvent-based paints, thinners, urethanes, etc., to your community's household hazardous waste day.

