

Save Money, Reduce Waste, and Recycle Unwanted Paint



LD 1308 “An Act to Establish A Stewardship Program for Architectural Paint” will create an industry-run program to increase access to safe paint collection, reuse and recycling.

OUR CURRENT SYSTEM IS WASTEFUL, HARMFUL, AND EXPENSIVE:

- Every year Mainers discard an estimated 300,000 gallons of unused paint.
- All this unused paint ends up in landfills or incinerators.
- Maine citizens currently have little or no access to recycling facilities for leftover paint.

Managing paint is expensive for taxpayers and municipalities.

- Local Maine taxpayers spend an estimated \$2.4 million on paint collection and management every year.
- Managing paint is the single largest cost for municipal household hazardous waste budgets; about half of HHW budgets are spent on paint.

Improper disposal is dangerous to Maine’s people and environment.

- Oil-based paint is highly flammable and can expose people to harmful fumes, and much older paint can contain lead, a highly poisonous metal.
- Paint is composed of resins, solvents, pigments and additives that are toxic to aquatic animals if paint ends up in the water supply.
- Maine families are exposed to chemicals called VOCs (volatile organic compounds) when leftover latex paint cans are left open to dry out at home prior to disposal.
- VOCs have short and long-term health effects.

PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP CREATES SOLUTIONS:

- Product Stewardship will reduce the amount of unwanted paint generated, and create a collection and recycling system for leftover paint generated by households and small businesses.
- The paint industry would be responsible for collecting and managing paint; relieving local governments of their costly efforts.
- An assessment on every new can of paint sold in the state would fund the system, shifting costs from taxpayers to consumers and creating incentives for a more sustainable industry.
- Paint retailers that choose to sign up as collection sites would benefit from increased traffic to their stores, and municipal collection locations will collect more paint and save money.
- This legislation is modeled after a program that is succeeding in Oregon and California.

PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP BENEFITS MAINERS:

- Maine residents and small businesses will have convenient access to drop-off locations.
- The environment and human health will be protected by keeping unwanted paint out of landfills, incinerators, or stockpiled in homes
- Municipal waste management budgets would see big savings.
- The paint industry, municipal leaders, environmental advocates, and many others support a state-wide program to efficiently and safely capture and manage this waste stream.