

For Immediate Release  
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## **CLEANING OUT THE GARAGE: PROVINCE DIRECTS INDUSTRY TO HELP DISPOSE OF HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE**

TORONTO — If you're like many Ontarians, you probably have leftover paint and chemicals taking up space in your garage or basement. In the near future, thanks to financial support from the makers of these and other products, disposing of them will be safer, simpler and more convenient, says Environment Minister Laurel Broten.

“Paint, batteries and other common household products can be harmful to our environment and public health if not disposed of properly,” Broten said. “We need the makers of these products to help divert these materials away from landfills and into recycling programs or proper disposal.”

To that end, Minister Broten has directed Waste Diversion Ontario, the industry-funded organization responsible for Ontario's successful Blue Box program, to develop and fund a diversion program for hazardous and special wastes from homes and small businesses.

Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO) has been asked to look at financial or other incentives to reuse and recycle hazardous materials, and to increase the number of collection sites, especially in areas that currently do not have access to depots. The organization is also to promote best practices and encourage innovative diversion techniques, and to develop an education program.

Materials will be added to the program in three phases beginning with paints, solvents, pesticides, disposable batteries and used oil filters and containers. WDO's plan for phase one must be delivered to the minister by May 31, 2007.

Future phases will include portable fire extinguishers, fluorescent lights, pharmaceuticals, syringes and thermostats and other measuring devices containing mercury.

Ontarians purchase tens of thousands of products containing common household hazardous and special materials annually. Any unused product – like leftover paint, cleaning solvents and half empty aerosol cans – ends up as waste that needs to be managed in an environmentally smart and safe way.

While the program is being finalized, Ontarians should continue to dispose of all hazardous products at local community environment days or collection depots. A listing of the types of hazardous materials communities collect and collection locations can be found on most municipal web sites.

“When it comes to protecting the health of our communities and the environment, the first goal is to divert materials from landfill through the 3Rs – reduce, reuse and recycle,” Broten said.

“However, encouraging new approaches and technologies, and giving municipalities and businesses the tools to divert more waste from disposal, are also key to dealing with the waste Ontarians produce.”

This initiative is one more way the McGuinty government is helping communities and industries find made-in-Ontario solutions for managing waste and protecting the environment. Other initiatives include:

- Introducing a deposit-refund program for beverage alcohol containers
- New rules to remove restrictions on recycling
- Working on new environmental assessment requirements to encourage the building of recycling facilities and new composting facilities.

The public can view the Minister’s letter to Waste Diversion Ontario outlining the requirements for a hazardous and special waste program by visiting the ministry’s web site at [www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/land/wda/mhsw.htm](http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/land/wda/mhsw.htm).

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