What Is the California Paint Stewardship Program?

More than 700 million gallons of architectural paint is sold each year in the U.S., and it is estimated that about 10 percent of that is available for recycling.

Until now, unused, leftover (postconsumer) paint has generally been managed through programs operated and paid for by local and state government agencies.

Starting in October 2012, a California law requires the paint and coatings industry to develop a financially and environmentally sustainable solution to manage postconsumer architectural paint. Under the new program, the paint industry will make paint recycling more convenient by setting up hundreds of drop-off sites throughout the state where consumers can take their paint. PaintCare will also conduct outreach and education about keeping paint out of the trash, buying the right amount of paint for a project, and using up remaining paint.

Program Products

These products have fees and are accepted at drop-off sites:

- Interior and exterior architectural paints: latex, acrylic, water-based, alkyd, oil-based, enamel (all types of finishes and sheens, including textured coatings)
- Deck coatings, floor paints (including elastomeric)
- Primers, sealers, undercoaters
- Stains
- Shellacs, lacquers, varnishes, urethanes (single component)
- Waterproofing concrete/masonry/wood sealers and repellents (not tar or bitumen-based)
- Swimming pool paints (single component)
- Metal coatings, rust preventatives

Non-Program Products

- Paint thinners, mineral spirits, solvents
- Aerosol paints (spray cans)
- Auto, marine, traffic/road marking, art/craft paints
- Caulking compounds, epoxies, glues, adhesives
- Paint additives, colorants, tints, resins
- Wood preservatives
- Roof patch and repair
- Tar and bitumen-based products
- 2-component coatings
- Deck cleaners
- Industrial Maintenance (IM) coatings
- Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) (shop application) paints and finishes

Note: Leaking, unlabeled, and empty containers are not accepted at drop-off sites.

For information about recycling and proper disposal of non-program products, please contact your garbage hauler, local environmental health agency, or public works department.

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Recycle with PaintCare

About the PaintCare Program

Who Is PaintCare?

PaintCare is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, established by the American Coatings Association to implement state-mandated paint stewardship programs on behalf of paint manufacturers in states that adopt a paint stewardship law.

PaintCare is currently running or preparing to implement programs in California, Connecticut, Oregon, and Rhode Island.

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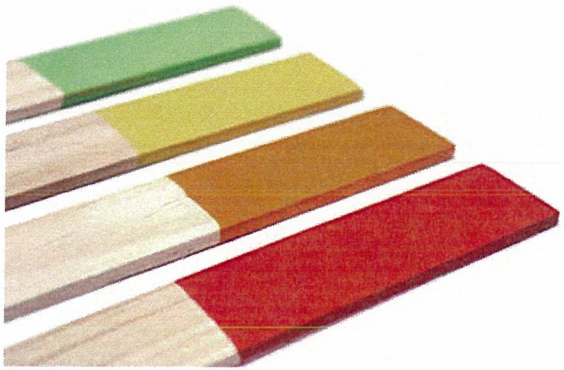
Paint Drop-Off Sites

PaintCare will establish hundreds of drop-off sites at paint retail stores, government-run household hazardous waste facilities, and other locations across California. When these sites are part of PaintCare, they will accept program products from all residents and certain businesses. To find a site near you, visit paintcare.org or call (855) 724-6809.



Recycling New and Old Paint

PaintCare will make sure your paint gets recycled or properly disposed of at state-authorized paint processing facilities. You can drop off new paint and old paint, even if it over 20 years old.

Funding and Fees

The program is funded by paint manufacturers paying the PaintCare Recovery Fee on all architectural paint sold in California. They pass the fee to distributers and retailers, who include the fee in the purchase price of paint. Fees are by container size as follows:

Half pint or less	$ 0.00
More than half pint to less than 1 gallon	$ 0.35
1 gallon	$ 0.75
More than 1 gallon to 5 gallons	$ 1.60

Retail stores can choose whether or not to display the fee separately on sales receipts. The fee is not a deposit – you do not receive it back when you drop off paint for recycling.

For more details, please visit paintcare.org or call (855) 724-6809.

What Products Are Covered?

Architectural paint or "Program Products" are defined as interior and exterior architectural coatings sold in containers of 5 gallons or less. They do not include aerosol, industrial, original equipment, or specialty coatings.

(See back panel for examples of program and non-program products.)

Who Can Use the Program?

In addition to residents, this program is available to trade painters, contractors and other businesses with one restriction: If your business produces more than 27 gallons of hazardous waste per month, you may only use the drop-off sites for your latex paint and not for your oil-based paint. To learn more about the 27 gallon restriction, contact PaintCare or the California Department of Toxic Substances Control.

Limits on Quantities at Drop-Off Sites

Drop-off sites may establish limits on the quantity of products they accept. Generally, the limit in small stores will be lower than in large stores. Please check with the site if you have more than 5 gallons.