

Hazardous Waste Disposal



It's important to responsibly recycle and dispose of hazardous waste. In some cases, our safety and our lives depend on it!

Garbage and recycling collectors and processors have witnessed an increase in the improper disposal of explosive and hazardous materials, both locally and provincially. Hazardous waste, such as propane canisters and rechargeable batteries from cell phones and hearing aids, can explode or ignite when they are processed at the landfill and during the recycling process, which can turn a regular household item into something dangerous or deadly.

Hazardous items can cause serious harm to workers and garbage and recycling facilities. When such items are incorrectly disposed of, a number of materials can be a health risk, cause personal injury, or be fatal to collectors and processors. Hazardous materials can also damage recycling facilities and landfills.

The risk of fire or explosion is especially high for collection vehicles, landfills, and recycling facilities because they contain significant amounts of paper and other flammable materials. The combination of easily flammable material, the type of machinery used, air, and large amounts of material in piles where sparks can smolder undetected for lengthy periods of time makes the presence of hazardous material especially dangerous.

What is hazardous waste? Items that are corrosive, flammable, poisonous, or explosive are considered hazardous. The most common household hazardous products come in the form of compressed gas canisters, flammable liquids, and lithium-ion batteries.



Marcia Dick, the City's Solid Waste Services Analyst, holding flammable and explosive pressurized gas containers at the Mission Flats Landfill Diversion Area ▶

Compressed Gas Canisters

Compressed gas canisters can release gases that will catch on fire, ignite and explode, or act as a projectile.

- Propane canisters
- Butane canisters
- Fire extinguishers
- Helium tanks
- Carbon dioxide canisters

Flammable Liquids

Flammable liquids give off vapours at or below 60°C that may ignite and cause fire or explosion.

- Aerosol cans
- Furniture stripper
- BBQ lighter fluid
- Pesticides
- Lawn mowers and outdoor equipment that uses diesel and/or gasoline
- Paint, paint stripper, paint thinner, turpentine, or varsol
- Camping fuel

Lithium-ion (Rechargeable) Batteries

Lithium-ion (rechargeable) batteries can catch fire or explode when they come in contact with metal.

- Power tools
- Vape pens and e-cigarettes
- Laptops
- Cell phones

Let's all be part of the solution to help prevent tragedies. Do not put hazardous materials in your recycling bins, garbage cans, drains, or toilets. Some materials may be recycled, but they need to be taken to a specific recycling facility that can handle and manage the material properly.

It is also important to ensure containers that can be recycled—either through residential recycling or through a specific location—are empty.

Download the **Waste Wise App** on your mobile device or visit **[Kamloops.ca/WasteWise](https://www.kamloops.ca/WasteWise)** to search what goes where.

