

HB 2955A: Statewide Product Stewardship for Household Hazardous Waste

Household hazardous waste is a term applied to those products many of us have sitting in our garages, basements or other storage areas that need special handling and disposal. Examples include flammable products like solvents; toxic home and garden products like herbicides or pesticides; and highly corrosive or reactive products like oven cleaners and pool chemicals. If these products are not properly managed, they pose risks to children from poisonings, to solid waste workers on collection routes and at disposal facilities from chemical reactions or releases, and to the environment from spills or through other pathways.

While many local governments have developed and funded collection services to help their residents properly dispose of these wastes, resources are limited and services fail to meet demand in many parts of the state. The financial burden on solid waste ratepayers to provide these limited services is already significant; expanding service levels is not really a viable option.

- HB 2955A will add resources to local programs that would otherwise have to increase fees to all rate payers, and shore up county budgets that have had to short-change other services to provide HHW services. Communities with limited services could take the opportunity to expand those services.

Under a statewide stewardship program for HHW, manufacturers who produce hazardous products will be responsible for the cost of ensuring that waste materials are collected and properly managed.

- State and local governments and solid waste rate payers currently bear the cost of safely managing and disposing HHW and have done so for decades. It is time for manufacturers to take responsibility for the hazardous products they sell and cover the cost of these needed programs.

As with Oregon's other product stewardship programs (paint and electronic waste):

- Manufacturers selling their products into the state will be required to belong to a stewardship organization. This organization will submit a plan that describes how they will work with local governments across the state to collect and properly manage wastes from their products.
- The stewardship organization will be required to achieve certain standards of convenience to ensure that services are available to all Oregonians.

The stewardship organization will recover the costs of providing its services from the manufacturers belonging to that organization. The cost of the program will include reimbursing the state for the cost of overseeing the program.

- No fee will be collected from the consumer at the point of sale. Manufacturers will incorporate their program expenses into their overall cost structure. This will provide an incentive for manufacturers to design and produce their products in a way that minimizes waste, environmental impacts and end-of-life management costs of their products.

This program will protect public health and environmental quality by responsibly collecting, handling and disposing of hazardous materials, while ensuring that responsibility for management of these materials lies with those who produce, sell and use them rather than with the general public.