

Surplus Paint Disposal

Paints can be donated, discarded as trash or designated as hazwaste--it depends. These guidelines also apply to most other solvents, varnishes, caulking and sealants. If in doubt, please ask your Environmental Health & Safety contact.

Donation is possible if the label is legible, the paint has never been frozen and if the can or bucket is over half full of liquid paint. We have had good luck donating usable paint through our Surplus Distribution program. Set the paint buckets in the reuse / bulk recycling area of your building, notify Harvard Recycling and we will pick them up when we come for the other donations and universal waste.

Discard the paint as trash if it is over half used and latex (ie, no oil-bases or "alkyd" label). Pry off the lid and allow the paint to dry up before disposal to prevent spillage on the way to the trash set-out. Use kitty litter or "speedy-dry" to wick up paint faster if you'd like.

If the paint is oil-based and over halfway used up, or the label is missing or illegible, work with your Building Manager to get it transported to your Hazardous Waste Satellite Accumulation Area and our hazwaste vendor will dispose of it properly.

Thanks for your interest in getting rid of your old paint the right way!

