Household hazardous waste collection accepts a lot, but there are limits, too

LACONIA — The Lakes Region Planning Commission will be holding the annual Household Hazardous Waste Collections on July 28 and August 4. However, there are some materials that are not accepted at these collections, including water-based latex paint, unused medications, and electronics. So what can you do with these materials?

Leftover latex paint

Use the paint up on other smaller projects or donate it to a local organization that could use the paint such as a theater group, school, recreational group, camp, or friends, neighbors, family, or even a local paint contractor. If you can’t find a place to donate it, see if your local transfer station facility will accept it at their swap shop.

Latex paint is generally good for up to ten years, and you can determine whether it is still usable by stirring it, and wiping on newspaper. If there are lumps in the paint, then the paint is old and should be dried out and thrown it out in the trash, as it is not considered toxic waste. To help dry out paint, mix in clay-based kitty litter in a ratio of two parts kitty litter to one part paint. Many hardware stores now sell “paint hardener” for this purpose. Some people mix newspaper or sawdust with the paint to speed up the drying time.

Unused medications

Unused medications entering local water sources can cause damage to the health of the community and aquatic life. The two main options for proper disposal are at one of the dozen different drop box locations around the Lakes Region or at the Lakes Region Household Hazardous Product Facility in Wolfeboro.


Unwanted electronics

If your electronic device is still in usable condition, consider donating it through the National Cristina Foundation www.cristina.org or World Computer Exchange www.worldcomputerexchange.org, which in turn distribute old electronics to families in need locally and around the world. You might also take your e-waste to retailers such as BestBuy, Staples, or Amazon for recycling and receive benefits such as an Amazon gift card or discounts on your next electronic purchase. Check with the retailers in advance.

There are many toxic chemicals found in electronics, including heavy metals that need to be disposed of properly. Most Lakes Region communities do accept e-waste at their solid waste facility for a modest fee.

For more information about Household Hazardous Waste Collections, visit www.lakesrpc.org or call 603-279-5941.

Notable people

The following local students were recently listed on Merrimack College’s Spring semester Dean’s List: Michaela McCarthy of Center Harbor; Haley Bartlett of Gilford; Gabrielle Beijer of Center Barnstead; Konstantinos Asprogiannis of Laconia; and Hannah Sullivan of Gilford. Merrimack College is located in North Andover, Massachusetts.