

# Additional Actions

- ◆ **Home Health Care** — prescription medications; used syringes.
- ◆ **Explosives** — ammunition; firecrackers; gunpowder.
- ◆ **Workshop** — corrosives; paints (other than latex); small compressed-gas cylinders; solvents; stains; strippers; thinners; varnish; wood preservatives; fluorescent bulbs.
- ◆ **Garden/Yard** — fungicides; herbicides; pesticides; pool chemicals.
- ◆ **Automotive** — antifreeze; auto batteries; degreasers; waste fuels-gasoline, kerosene; used motor oil mixed with other fuels.

## The following items will not be accepted:

- ◆ **Friable asbestos** — accepted by appointment at all Solid Waste Authority landfills for a fee. Call (302) 764-2732.
- ◆ **Non-friable asbestos** — accepted by appointment at all Solid Waste Authority landfills for a fee.
- ◆ **Unknown substances** — greater than 1 gallon or 8 pounds.
- ◆ **Radioactive waste** — not accepted.

## Materials with other disposal methods:

- ◆ **Latex paint** — water-soluble, not hazardous; can be taken to landfill.
- ◆ **Containers with less than 1-inch of material** — can go in regular trash.
- ◆ **Used motor oil** — accepted at specific “Recycle Delaware” locations.

## Maintain a Healthy Lawn and Garden

A healthy lawn and garden makes a home more attractive and is also environmentally beneficial. Healthy lawns and gardens, coupled with trees and shrubs, can help prevent erosion and runoff to the bays. However, lawns can be a source of pollution if proper lawn-care techniques are not followed.

- ◆ **Perform soil tests every 3–4 years** to determine the amount of nutrients necessary for a healthy lawn. Contact your local soil conservation district for more

information and test kits.

- ◆ **Use fertilizers only as needed in the fall.** Do not heavily water lawn after application because it may lead to excessive growth of aquatic algae.
- ◆ **Don't give your lawn a crew cut.** Lawns should be 2–4 inches high. Cutting too short or too frequently weakens grass and fosters weed growth.
- ◆ **Leave grass clippings on the lawn** to serve as a natural fertilizer or compost them.
- ◆ **Use pesticides sparingly.** If using pesticides, read and follow directions carefully. Try to use natural (non-toxic) alternatives to pesticides, such as insecticidal soap. Never use pesticides if rain is in the forecast because the chemicals will run off into a local stream or storm drain.
- ◆ **Consult your local nursery for advice on selecting plants suited for the site characteristics.** Use mulch to reduce weed growth and evaporation.
- ◆ **Do not over-water your lawn or garden.** Excessive watering can cause chemicals to leach into ground water and can make plants more prone to disease.

## Build a Compost Pile

Composting is a simple, cost-effective way to turn household scraps and landscaping debris into a beneficial resource. This reduces waste entering the landfills, diminishes the need for chemical fertilizers, and reduces the pollutant loads in residential run-off. Some key steps to get started are:

- ◆ **Select a flat, well-drained spot that gets full sun.** Try to build the pile in the middle of the garden.
- ◆ **Construct a compost bin out of scrap lumber, bricks, concrete blocks, or wire.** Make sure the bin has openings to let air penetrate the pile.
- ◆ **Feed the pile, mixing coarse and fine materials in 6- to 8-inch layers.** The bottom layer should contain twigs, chopped cornstalks, or other coarse material. Next, add a layer high in nitrogen such as grass clippings or manure. Top with soil and repeat the process. Sprinkle the pile with water.
- ◆ **Mix the layers well and shape so the center is lower than the sides** to help water flow into the pile. Turn the pile once a month and remoisten the material as you turn it.

- ◆ **Plant material should decompose into compost within five months in warm weather, longer under cool/dry conditions.** Spread compost in the garden and till it under to benefit soil and plants.

## Keep Septic Systems Functioning Properly

Septic systems require periodic check-ups and proper care to function properly. They must have a healthy diet to prevent ground water and soil contamination as well as costly repair bills.

- ◆ **Keep all toxic and hazardous chemicals out of your septic systems.** Even small amounts can destroy your system's biological digestion.
- ◆ **Avoid dumping grease/fats down kitchen drains.** They can cause blockages in the system. Collect grease in a container near the sink.
- ◆ **Have your septic tank pumped by a certified contractor every three years.** Failure to pump can cause clogging and result in costly repairs.
- ◆ **Don't drive over absorption fields.** This can cause compacting, which can result in clogging. Do not plant trees over the system or construct walkways, patios, swimming pools, or other permanent structures over or within the leach field.
- ◆ **Minimize the solids load.** Minimize or avoid using a garbage disposal unit. Remove scraps with the garbage or compost them.
- ◆ **Minimize the liquid load.** The less wastewater you produce, the less the soil has to absorb. Repair leaky fixtures, wash clothes only with a full load. Use water-saving devices. Do not let water run while brushing teeth or washing dishes.
- ◆ **If you have a holding tank, it should be pumped out every 10 to 15 days.**

## Follow Bay-Friendly Boating Practices

Many people cherish the recreational opportunities provided the waterways in the Basin. By obeying the law and taking common-sense measures into account during the use of the waters we can preserve or enhance the quality of life for generations to come. Therefore:

- ◆ **Avoid discharging sewage directly into the water.** Sewage contains disease-carrying organisms and nutrients that are harmful to humans, plants, and

wildlife. Boaters should have some type of sanitation device on board, such as a portable toilet or holding tank, to treat the sewage. The waste should be disposed at dump stations or pumpout facilities. Dumping of sewage directly into the water is illegal. Take the time to find the proper disposal area near your boating area and, whenever possible, use onshore rest rooms.

- ◆ **Don't litter.** Dispose of trash in proper containers once onshore.
- ◆ **Clean fish at designated areas and dispose waste in proper containers.** Do not throw fish waste into surface waters at marinas; the waste can cause water-quality problems within the marinas.
- ◆ **Dispose of or store liquid waste (e.g., oil, grease, detergents, paint) in the proper containers.**
- ◆ **Avoid over-fueling.** One quart of engine oil spilled in 1 million quarts of seawater will kill half of the exposed crab larvae. Do not top off tanks. Purchase vents that act as fuel/air separators so that fuel does not enter the bilge. Use oil-absorbing pads in the bilge and dispose properly.
- ◆ **Perform boat maintenance out of the water if possible.** Use areas designated for dust and scraping control, where wash water is effectively treated. Treat paint dust and scrapings as hazardous waste and dispose properly. Recycle boat engine oil and other fluids.
- ◆ **While keeping boat hulls clean is important for efficient operation, use detergents and antifouling treatments that do not contain phosphate and are biodegradable to minimize environmental impacts.** Antifouling paints work by releasing chemicals that are toxic to unwanted organisms that attach to boat surfaces. Unfortunately, high concentrations of chemicals such as copper and tin can be extremely harmful to other aquatic organisms in enclosed marine environments such as bays, harbors, and marinas.
- ◆ **Obey speed limits and no-wake zones.** Slow your boat before coming to speed-limit markers. Boat wakes contribute to shoreline erosion. Be careful in shallow areas; do not disturb the sediment or uproot vegetation with the boat propeller.