VAN BUREN COUNTY
RECYCLING GUIDE
Your resource for helping clean up our earth.
This is a convenient listing of waste reduction and recycling opportunities along with tips on safer disposal alternatives for potentially hazardous waste.

For additional information about recycling, please contact:
Van Buren Conservation District
1035 E Michigan Ave.
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269.657.4030 x5
emilly.hickmott@macd.org
VanBurenCD.org

Due to continuing change, it is recommended that you call the companies listed before using their services to ensure that their printed information is still accurate.
REDUCE
If there’s less waste, there’s less to recycle or reuse. Some ways you can reduce the amount of waste you produce include:

- not using disposable dishes
- carrying groceries in cloth bags instead of paper or plastic
- buying items in bulk
- buying concentrated items
- buying durable products and fixing them whenever possible
- buying reusable, not disposable items
- buying products with minimal packaging

REUSE
Just because you cannot use something any longer does not necessarily mean that it has lost all of its value. Ways that you can reuse items include:

- handing down old clothes and household items
- donating items to local organizations
- buying used items
- having a garage sale
- borrowing or renting infrequently used items
- using reusable gift bags rather than wrapping paper
- using jars and plastic containers for storage purposes

RECYCLE
Recycling helps conserve resources, reduce pollution, reduce land degradation, save energy, reduce the need for landfill use, and create jobs. Recycling expands the United States’ manufacturing industry and increases the United States’ competitiveness in the global marketplace. Ways you can further participate in recycling include:

- buying items that come in recyclable packaging made of valuable materials like glass and metals
- taking advantage of curbside programs available to you
- voicing your desire to recycle to your township, city, or village staff
- participating in household and tire recycling collections
- participating in deposit and refund programs

BUY RECYCLED
By purchasing products made with recycled content, you “close the loop” by helping to create a market for recycled products. Read labels when you go shopping and make an effort to purchase products that are made from recycled materials. Look for the symbols to the right, along with other symbols on products which indicate that they are made with recycled content and/or are recyclable. Some examples of recycled and otherwise sustainable products include:

- Who Gives a Crap toilet paper
- Prana clothing
- Plaine Products hair and body products
- Earthwise bags
- Everybody’s Paint
- Patagonia

THE FACT IS:
The average American generates 4.4 lbs. of waste per day!
THE COST OF RECYCLING

If recycling is good for the environment, benefits the economy, and creates new products, why does it cost us to recycle? Just like garbage services have associated costs, recycling services cost money. Consider these two paths for a milk jug, adopted from a Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) publication on recycling costs.

Milk Jug Thrown Away:
I throw my empty milk jug into the garbage, and a garbage hauler picks up my milk jug and hauls it to a landfill to be compacted and buried for at least the next 500 years. When you pay for garbage service, you’re paying for the management of liquids and gases, maintenance, closure costs, long-term monitoring, and new landfill construction costs.

Milk Jug Recycled:
I rinse my milk jug and put it into the recycling bin. A recycling hauler picks up my milk jug and hauls it to a material recovery facility (MRF) where it is sorted, baled, sold, and transported to companies that will make the milk jug into lawn furniture, buckets, automobiles, etc.

Recycling costs money because the materials must be hauled and managed before being made into new products. The money made from selling these products does not cover the cost of hauling and managing for a variety of reasons. Fluctuating oil prices affect the amount paid for recycled plastic. Additionally, when MRF’s receive high amounts of dirty materials (i.e. food-encrusted), it is more difficult to sell them to end use manufacturers, which affects the cost of recycling services.

The natural resources like oil, petroleum, wood, and metals that products are made from require a large amount of energy to extract, and often result in habitat destruction. The more we can reuse already extracted resources, the more energy we will conserve, and the more habitats we will protect. Recycling products also reduces the need for landfills and incinerators, which require large amounts of energy, result in habitat destruction, and release harmful gases into the air.
Recyclers rely on receiving clean and quality materials in order to sell them to end use manufacturers who go on to make products from the recycled materials. China, previously a major purchaser of the United States’ recycled plastic, has stopped buying plastic from the U.S. due to high levels of dirty materials, also called contamination. Unfortunately, this often means that the plastic just ends up in the landfill. This is not a discouragement on recycling but rather an encouragement to clean and dry the materials you recycle. If there is food, grease, or beauty products soaked into a paper product, simply cut out the piece that is contaminated, throw it in the garbage, and recycle the rest of the product.

There are three types of contamination that can affect the quality of a batch of recyclable items:

- Placing garbage in your recycling bin
- Leaving leftover products in containers
- Placing “possibly recyclable” materials in your recycling bin that are not recyclable

Placing “possibly recyclable” materials in your recycling bin is known as “wishful recycling.” This occurs when we say or think, “I’m not sure if this item can be recycled, so I’ll throw it in anyway, just in case.” Though our intentions are good, this often ends up slowing down the recycling process and increasing contamination. If you don’t know if something can be recycled, contact your recycling provider or the conservation district.

BE SURE TO CLEAN YOUR RECYCLABLES!
ACID & BASES

Household Recycling Collections
occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

AEROSOL CANS

Household Recycling Collections
occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

AMERICAN FLAGS

Household Recycling Collections
occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

Contact your local American Legion or Veterans of Foreign Wars Post for information on acceptance.

AMMUNITION, FIREARMS, AND WEAPONS

Kalamazoo County Bomb Unit
150 E Crosstown Pkwy Suite A, Kalamazoo, MI
……………………………...(269) 337-8994
Call dispatch and ask for bomb unit to schedule pickup. Accepts: 50 caliber and above only.

Michigan State Police
43255 60th Avenue, Paw Paw, MI
…………………………………(269) 657-5551
Call ahead to schedule drop-off first.

Van Buren County Sheriff’s Department
205 S Kalamazoo Street, Paw Paw, MI
…………………………………(269) 657-2006
Call ahead to schedule drop-off first.

ANTI-FREEZE

Contact your local auto shop for information on acceptance.

Household Recycling Collections
occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

C Stoddard & Sons
3456 12 Street, Wayland, MI
…………………………………(269) 792-6591

Ericksen’s Garage
73320 M-40 Hwy, Lawton, MI
…………………………………(269) 624-1000

Heritage Crystal Clean
3721 Northridge Drive NW, Suite 100, Walker, MI
…………………………………(616) 447-0013
Commercial and industrial quantities.

Muffler Man
274 Broadway St, South Haven, MI
…………………………………(269) 637-1811

Performance Plus Quick Lube
5812 S Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI
…………………………………(269) 382-2204
850 Sunset Drive, South Haven, MI
…………………………………(269) 637-3143
Call ahead to schedule drop-off first.

APPLIANCES

Major Appliance
10759 Stadium Drive, Kalamazoo, MI
…………………………………(269) 375-9500
Drop-off only | Working and not working

Clarks Auto Parts & Salvage
56472 Red Arrow Hwy, Lawrence, MI
…………………………………(269) 674-4905
Drop-off only | Not working

Community Thrift Shop
1000 E Michigan Avenue, Paw Paw, MI
…………………………………(269) 657-4186
Drop-off only | Not working

Efficiency United / IN-MI Power
…………………………………(877) 367-3191
Call to schedule pick-up | Not working
Habitat for Humanity Habistore
56633 M-43 Hwy, Bangor, MI
.............................................(269) 302-0130
Drop-off only | Working

Kalamazoo Valley Habitat ReStore
7612 S Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI
.............................................(269) 381-5523
Call to schedule drop-off or pick-up | Working

Harbor Habitat Restore
2302 Plaza Drive, Benton Harbor, MI
.............................................(269) 927-0006
Call to schedule drop-off or pick-up | Working

L & L Auto Parts and Salvage
59333 S Lagrave Street, Paw Paw, MI
.............................................(269) 657-5933
Drop-off only | Not working

Lakeshore Appliance
19883 Blue Star Hwy, South Haven, MI
.............................................(269) 637-8933
Drop-off only | Working and not working

McPike Auto Salvage
25172 CR 665, Bloomingdale, MI
.............................................(269) 521-7673
Drop-off only | Not working

South Haven Recyclers
3110 67th Street, South Haven, MI
.............................................(269) 637-4828
Drop-off only | Not working

PAUSTIAN CONCRETE
6410 Old Pipestone Rd, Eau Claire, MI
.............................................(269) 461-6449

AUTOMOBILES

Clarks Auto Parts & Salvage
56472 Red Arrow Hwy, Lawrence, MI
.............................................(269) 674-4905

L & L Auto Parts and Salvage
59333 S Lagrave Street, Paw Paw, MI
.............................................(269) 657-5933

McPike Auto Salvage
25172 CR 665, Bloomingdale, MI
.............................................(269) 521-7673

South Haven Recyclers
3110 67th Street, South Haven, MI
.............................................(269) 637-4828

BAGS

Paper and Plastic — many local grocery stores and retail shops are accepting plastic bags for recycling. See THRIFT SHOPS & CONSIGNMENT STORES in this guide. Ask about bag recycling at your favorite store.

Community Thrift Shop
1000 E Michigan Avenue, Paw Paw, MI
.............................................(269) 657-4186

Meijer
1223 Phoenix Street, South Haven, MI
.............................................(269) 639-3500

Recycling Programs
Most curbside and drop-off programs will accept brown paper bags for recycling. See RECYCLING CURBSIDE and RECYCLING DROP-OFF PROGRAMS in this guide.

ASBESTOS


ASPHALT

Consumer’s Concrete
1100 Nazareth Road, Kalamazoo, MI
.............................................(269) 342-9869
Accepts: asphalt, brick, and concrete

Jensen’s Excavating
13271 M-140 Hwy, South Haven, MI
.............................................(269) 637-5642
Accepts: asphalt only
Walmart
1013 South Kalamazoo Street, Paw Paw, MI
.............................................(269) 415-6001
201 73rd Street, South Haven, MI
.............................................(269) 639-2260

BATTERIES – HOUSEHOLD

Flame Tamer Fire Protection
37881 Peters Dr, Paw Paw, MI
.............................................(269) 657-0942

Household Recycling Collections
occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

BATTERIES – AUTOMOBILE

Advanced Auto Parts
306 S Kalamazoo Street, Paw Paw, MI
.............................................(269) 657-4357

Clarks Auto Parts & Salvage
56472 Red Arrow Hwy, Lawrence, MI
.............................................(269) 674-4905

Household Recycling Collections
occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

L & L Auto Parts and Salvage
59333 S Lagrave Street, Paw Paw, MI
.............................................(269) 657-5933

McPike Auto Salvage
25172 CR 665, Bloomingdale, MI
.............................................(269) 521-7673

South Haven Recyclers
3110 67th Street, South Haven, MI
.............................................(269) 637-4828

BOOKS

Before donating, please ensure the books are in good condition because the libraries often use the donated books for book sales.

Antwerp Sunshine Library
24823 Front Avenue, Mattawan, MI
.............................................(269) 668-2534

Bailey Museum
903 S Bailey Avenue, South Haven, MI
.............................................(269) 637-3251

Bangor Branch Library
420 Division Street, Bangor, MI
.............................................(269) 427-8810

Bloomingle Branch Library
109 E Kalamazoo Street, Bloomingdale, MI
.............................................(269) 521-7601

Covert Branch Library
33680 M-140 Hwy, Covert, MI
.............................................(269) 764-1298

Gobles Branch Library
105 E Main Street, Gobles, MI
.............................................(269) 628-4537

Hartford Public Library
15 S Franklin Street, Hartford, MI
.............................................(269) 621-3408

Lawrence Branch Library
212 N Paw Paw Street, Lawrence, MI
.............................................(269) 628-4537

Paw Paw District Library
609 W Michigan Avenue, Paw Paw, MI
.............................................(269) 657-3800

South Haven Memorial Library
314 Broadway Street, South Haven, MI
.............................................(269) 637-2403

Webster Memorial Branch Library
200 N Phelps Street, Decatur, MI
.............................................(269) 423-4771

See HOUSEHOLD GOODS in this guide.

CARDBOARD

See RECYCLING CURBSIDE PROGRAMS in this guide.

See RECYCLING DROP-OFF PROGRAMS in this guide.
CELL PHONES

AT&T
804 S Kalamazoo Street, Paw Paw, MI
.............................................(269) 657-1800

Cell Phones for Soldiers
Reference www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com
for drop-off locations.

Community Thrift Shop
1000 E Michigan Avenue, Paw Paw, MI
.............................................(269) 657-4186

Sprint
6880 W Main Street, Kalamazoo, MI
.............................................(269) 372-4108

Verizon
420 S Kalamazoo Street, Paw Paw, MI
.............................................(269) 655-0790

CLEANING CHEMICALS

Household Recycling Collections
occurs twice yearly, see
vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

See ALTERNATIVES: HOMEMADE CLEANING PRODUCTS in this guide.

CLOTHES

See HOUSEHOLD GOODS in this guide.

THE FACT IS:
95% of textiles can be recycled, and the average American throws away 82 lbs. of textile waste a year! Even if you have clothes and other textiles that may not be able to be resold, donate them anyways. Many thrift stores recycle textiles that they cannot resell, so seek out a local store that will recycle items they cannot sell. PlanetAid and ThredUp are other national options for recycling textiles.

COMPOSTING

Composting is the natural decomposition of organic materials into a dark, nutrient-rich soil component called humus.

How to Compost?
Ingredients needed: browns, greens, and water. Browns (carbon-rich) are materials such as dry leaves, wood chips, bark, and sawdust. Greens (nutrient-rich) are materials such as grass clippings, green leaves, garden debris, fruit/vegetable peels, and other kitchen wastes.

Mixture Needed: Aim to have a 2:1 brown: green mixture, but a 1:1 mixture will work as well. The higher the green content, the more turning of the compost pile is required to avoid odor. The mixture used depends on the availability of material and how active or passive you want to be as a composter.

What to Compost:
- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Eggshells
- Coffee grounds and filters
- Tea bags
- Nut shells
- Shredded newspaper
- Cardboard
- Paper
- Yard trimmings
- Grass clippings
- Houseplants
- Hay and straw
- Leaves
- Sawdust
- Wood chips
- Cotton and wool rags
- Dryer and vacuum cleaner lint
- Hair and fur
- Fireplace ashes

What Not to Compost:
- Black walnut tree leaves or twigs (harmful to plants)
- Coal or charcoal ash (harmful to plants)
- Dairy products (creates odor and attracts rodents)
- Diseased or insect-ridden plants (harmful to plants)

See next page for complete list
• Fats, grease, lard, and oils (creates odor and attracts rodents)
• Invasive or non-native plants
• Meat and fish bones and scraps (creates odor and attracts rodents)
• Pet wastes (harmful to humans)
• Yard trimmings treated with chemical pesticides (might kill beneficial composting organisms)

Composting Outdoors
• Select a dry, shady spot near a water source.
• Build a compost pile by placing the materials in a compost bin or an open pile. Bins should be roughly 1 cubic yard in size. Larger pieces of greens and browns should be shredded/torn.
• Bins can be simple, elaborate, homemade, or store-bought. Building a bin out of three wooden pallets is a simple, inexpensive way to build your own bin. Search the internet for tips on how to build your own compost bin for additional tips.
• Keep the pile as moist as a wrung-out sponge. If your pile becomes too moist, it will rot and become odorous. If your pile gets too dry, it won’t compost very quickly.
• Maintain air flow in the compost pile by turning it or mixing it with a pitchfork occasionally.

Composting Indoors
• A worm composting bin (a vermicomposter) is a great option for an indoor composter. The worms aid in the composting process and keeping them indoors protects them from extreme temperatures. Indoor composting is a great option for people who don’t have the option to compost outdoors (e.g. apartment-dwellers).
• Worm composting bins can be homemade or store-bought. The Environmental Protection Agency details how to set up your own vermicomposter, or you can do your own internet search on how to build your own vermicompost bin.

Use the Compost
Usable compost can be achieved in 2 to 18 months, depending on moisture, additions, turning, etc. The finished product is a valuable soil amendment that can be used in gardens, landscape beds, or added to potting soil. Vermicomposting will produce “compost tea” as well (a nutrient-rich liquid) which can be given to outdoor plants or watered down and given to indoor plants.

CONCRETE

Consumer’s Concrete
1100 Nazareth Road, Kalamazoo, MI
.................................................................(269) 342-9869
Accepts: asphalt, brick, and concrete

Jensen’s Excavating
13271 M-140 Hwy, South Haven, MI
..........................................................(269) 637-5642
Accepts: concrete only

Paustian Concrete
6410 Old Pipestone Rd, Eau Claire, MI
..........................................................(269) 461-6449
Accepts: concrete only

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

Habitat for Humanity Habistore
56633 M-43 Hwy, Bangor, MI
..........................................................(269) 302-0130
Drop-off only | Working

Kalamazoo Valley Habitat ReStore
7612 S Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI
..........................................................(269) 381-5523
Call to schedule drop-off or pick-up | Working

COOKING OIL

Household Recycling Collections
occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

DRUMS AND BARRELS

Padno’s
30750 Edwards Street, Dowagiac, MI
..........................................................(269) 782-6177
1410 Paw Paw Avenue, Benton Harbor, MI
..........................................................(269) 927-1030
ELECTRONICS

**Best Buy**
6900 S Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI
..................................................(269) 327-2008
$ for all large items

**Community Thrift Shop**
1000 E Michigan Avenue, Paw Paw, MI
..................................................(269) 657-4186
Accepts: all electronics with a cord or batteries
| $ for TV’s and computer monitors

**Padno’s**
30750 Edwards Street, Dowagiac, MI
..................................................(269) 782-6177
1410 Paw Paw Avenue, Benton Harbor, MI
..................................................(269) 927-1030

EXPLOSIVES

**Berrien County Bomb Unit**
919 Port Street, St. Joseph, MI
..................................................(269) 983-3060
Call dispatch and ask for bomb unit to schedule pick-up.

**Kalamazoo County Bomb Unit**
150 E Crosstown Pkwy, Suite A, Kalamazoo, MI
..................................................(269) 337-8994
Accepts: bulk gun powder and suspicious packages, call for other items. Call dispatch and ask for bomb unit to schedule pick-up.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

**Flame Tamer Fire Protection**
37881 Peters Dr, Paw Paw, MI
..................................................(269) 657-0942

Household Recycling Collections
occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

FUELS

Household Recycling Collections
occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

FURNITURE

See HOUSEHOLD GOODS in this guide.

GARDEN FLATS AND POTS

**East Jordan Plastics, Inc.**
1600 Steive Drive, South Haven, MI
..................................................(269) 637-3700
First call Corporate (800) 353-1190 to have materials approved. Then, call South Haven office to schedule drop-off.

GLASS

See RECYCLING CURBSIDE PROGRAMS in this guide.

See RECYCLING DROP-OFF PROGRAMS in this guide.

HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS

Household Recycling Collections
occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

Lion’s Club
Collects eye glasses for reuse. Drop boxes are located throughout the county at various places (e.g. stores, banks, funeral homes, libraries, etc.) For a complete list of drop-box sites, please contact your local Lion’s Club.

EYE GLASSES

**Community Thrift Shop**
1000 E Michigan Avenue, Paw Paw, MI
..................................................(269) 657-4186

Household Recycling Collections
occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details
Kalamazoo Household Hazardous Waste
1301 Lamont Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI
............................................(269) 373-5211
Open to Almena, Antwerp, and Paw Paw Township residents only.

HEARING AIDS

Household Recycling Collections
occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

HOUSEHOLD GOODS

360°
4618 W Main Street, Kalamazoo, MI
............................................(269) 276-0288
Thrift & Consignment

American Cancer Society
Discovery Shop
4508 W Main Street, Kalamazoo, MI
............................................(269) 345-0661
Thrift

Aubrey’s Closet
101 Locust Street, Allegan, MI
............................................(269) 673-5385
Thrift & Consignment

Christy’s Fine Furniture & Accessories
3017 Oakland Dr, Kalamazoo, MI
............................................(269) 344-5188
Thrift & Consignment
Consignment items must be pre-approved.
Email consignwithchristy@gmail.com

Community Thrift Shop
1000 E Michigan Avenue, Paw Paw, MI
............................................(269) 657-4186
Thrift

Decatur Human Services
207 E Delaware Street, Decatur, MI
............................................(269) 423-9958

From There to Here
43239 Red Arrow Hwy, Paw Paw, MI
............................................(269) 657-8396
Thrift & Consignment

Habitat for Humanity Habistore
56633 M-43 Hwy, Bangor, MI
............................................(269) 302-0130
Thrift

Harbor Habitat Restore
2302 Plaza Drive, Benton Harbor, MI
............................................(269) 927-0006
Thrift

His Place Hope Chest Thrift Store
24 W Main Street, Hartford, MI
............................................(269) 308-3048
Thrift

Hornbarger Auction
325 W Main Street, Hartford, MI
............................................(269) 621-1002
Thrift

Kalamazoo Valley Habitat ReStore
7612 S Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI
............................................(269) 381-5523
Thrift

Kalamazoo Kitty
4217 Portage Street, Kalamazoo, MI
............................................(269) 365-0194
Thrift & Consignment

Lakeshore Rescue Mission
1675 Phoenix Avenue, South Haven, MI
............................................(269) 637-5300
Thrift

Marie’s Place
M-43/M-40 Junction, Gobles, MI
............................................(269) 906-5359
Thrift

Planet Aid Bins
www.planetaid.org/your-local-planetaid/michigan
Donations only

Plato’s Closet
6414 S Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI
............................................(269) 327-6622
Consignment
Rescued Treasures  
524 N Burdick Street, Kalamazoo, MI  
...........................................................................................................................................(269) 383-1044  
Thrift

Rescued Treasures Al-Van Humane Society  
07591 Blue Star Hwy, South Haven, MI  
...........................................................................................................................................(269) 639-8180  
Thrift

Saint Luke’s Thrift Store  
432 S Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI  
...........................................................................................................................................(269) 343-3194  
Thrift

Saint Vincent De Paul Thrift Store  
513 Eleanor Street, Kalamazoo, MI  
...........................................................................................................................................(269) 388-4544  
Thrift

Salvation Army  
5117 Portage Street, Kalamazoo, MI  
1269 E M-89 Plainwell, MI  
............................................................................................................................................(800) SATRUCK  
Thrift

Second Impressions  
3750 S Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI  
...........................................................................................................................................(269) 345-7757  
Thrift

The Seeded Earth  
102 W Saint Joseph Street, Lawrence, MI  
...........................................................................................................................................(269) 674-8887  
Thrift & Consignment

The Daisy Thrift Store  
1210 Phoenix Street, Suite 3, South Haven, MI  
...........................................................................................................................................(269) 639-2228  
Thrift

Turn it Around  
133 W Allegan Street, Otsego, MI  
...........................................................................................................................................(269) 694-6022  
Thrift

INK & TONER CARTRIDGES

Cartridge World  
4512 Stadium Drive, Kalamazoo, MI  
............................................................................................................................................(269) 324-6331

Community Thrift Shop  
1000 E Michigan Avenue, Paw Paw, MI  
............................................................................................................................................(269) 657-4186

JUNK MAIL

Catalog Choice  
www.catalogchoice.com

Credit Card & Insurance Solicitations  
www.optoutprescreen.com/opt_form.cgi

General Junk  
$ 
Direct Marketing Association  
https://dmachoice.thedma.org

LIGHTING

(e.g. lamp ballasts and lightbulbs)

Household Recycling Collections  
occurs twice yearly, see  
vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

Kalamazoo Household Hazardous Waste  
1301 Lamont Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI  
............................................................................................................................................(269) 373-5211

Open to Almena, Antwerp, and Paw Paw Township residents only for free. Open to all others for a cost.
MEDICATIONS

The Van Buren County Sheriff’s Office in conjunction with the Van Buren Substance Abuse Task Force is now providing permanent drop boxes as a way to dispose of prescription and over the counter medications, vitamins, and other supplements. Not accepted: liquids, patches, sharps, lancets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bronson/Lakeview Pharmacy</td>
<td>52375 Main Street, Mattawan, MI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Fare Supermarket</td>
<td>847 S Kalamazoo Street, Paw Paw, MI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartford Police Department</td>
<td>19 W Main Street, Hartford, MI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Healthcare Provider</td>
<td>Check with your healthcare provider for other available collection options.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill’s Pharmacy</td>
<td>404 Hazen Street, Paw Paw, MI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hometown Bangor Pharmacy</td>
<td>3 W Monroe Street, Bangor, MI</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hometown Gobles Pharmacy</td>
<td>206 S State Street, Gobles, MI</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hometown Lawton Pharmacy</td>
<td>350 N Main Street, Lawton, MI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medicine Tree Pharmacy</td>
<td>56109 Village Center Circle Mattawan, MI</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>South Haven City Police Department</td>
<td>90 Blue Star Hwy, South Haven, MI</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Value Drug</td>
<td>08337 M-140 Hwy, South Haven, MI</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Van Buren/Cass District Health Department</td>
<td>23200 Red Arrow Hwy, Mattawan, MI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Van Buren Community Mental Health</td>
<td>801 Hazen Street, Paw Paw, MI</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Van Buren County Sheriff’s Office</td>
<td>205 S Kalamazoo Street, Paw Paw, MI</td>
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MERCURY

Household Recycling Collections
occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

METAL

See RECYCLING CURBSIDE PROGRAMS in this guide.

See RECYCLING DROP-OFF PROGRAMS in this guide.

See SCRAP METAL/SALVAGE in this guide.

OIL (MOTOR)

Oil must be free of all contaminants (e.g. dirt, water, etc.) to be accepted. Contact your local auto shop for information on acceptance.

Advanced Auto Parts
306 S Kalamazoo Street, Paw Paw, MI
..............................................................................(269) 657-4357

Arrow Automotive
59489 Red Arrow Hwy, Paw Paw, MI
..............................................................................(269) 308-3149
Call ahead to schedule drop-off.

C Stoddard & Sons
3456 12 Street, Wayland, MI
..............................................................................(269) 792-6591
Accepts large quantities.

Critical Car Care
37308 W Red Arrow Hwy, Paw Paw, MI
..............................................................................(269) 655-0911

Dan’s Automotive
56725 M-43 Hwy, Bangor, MI
..............................................................................(269) 427-1747
Call ahead to schedule drop-off.

Decatur Towing & Auto Center
47211 M-51 Hwy, Decatur, MI
..............................................................................(269) 423-9020
Ericksen's Garage
73320 M-40 Hwy, Lawton, MI
............................................(269) 624-1000

Muffler Man
274 Broadway Street, South Haven, MI
............................................(269) 637-1811

O'Reilly Auto Parts
735 S Kalamazoo Street, Paw Paw, MI
383 Blue Star Hwy, South Haven, MI
............................................(269) 657-2886
............................................(269) 206-3393

Performance Plus Quick Lube
850 Sunset Drive, South Haven, MI
............................................(269) 637-3143

Seeyole of Paw Paw
161 Ampey Road, Paw Paw, MI
............................................(269) 657-3124

SNK Transmission & Auto Repair
22203 M-40 Hwy, Gobles, MI
............................................(269) 628-0186
Call ahead to schedule drop-off.

South Haven Recyclers
3110 67th Street, South Haven, MI
............................................(269) 637-4828
Call ahead to schedule drop-off.

Tractor Supply
1000 S Kalamazoo Street, Paw Paw, MI
............................................(269) 657-2107
5-gallon limit per drop-off.

Walmart Tire & Lube
201 73rd Street, South Haven, MI
............................................(269) 639-2360

West Point Auto Sales
24827 Red Arrow Hwy, Mattawan, MI
............................................(269) 668-9022

QUICK TIP:
Latex paint is the safest paint to use, since it is water-based. It cleans up easily with water, so there’s no need for toxic thinners. Choose latex paint when possible. Purchase only the quantity needed and use the product as it was intended to be used. Use up all of the paint, if possible. If you must throw it out, be sure to dry in the sun first.

PAINT

ePaint Recyclers
551 Michigan Avenue, Battle Creek, MI
............................................(269) 760-8143

C Stoddard & Sons
3456 12 Street, Wayland, MI
............................................(269) 792-6591
Household Recycling Collections occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

PAPER

See RECYCLING CURBSIDE PROGRAMS in this guide.

See RECYCLING DROP-OFF PROGRAMS in this guide.

PAPER SHREDDING

Check your local credit union for information about periodic shred days on which you can drop off paper that needs to be shredded.

Arbor Credit Union
701 S Paw Paw Street, Lawrence, MI
..........................(269) 375-6702

Honor Credit Union
104 N Main Street, Lawton, MI
..........................(269) 345-7804
422 S Kalamazoo Street, Paw Paw, MI
..........................(269) 655-0000
749 Phillips Street, South Haven, MI
..........................(269) 637-2800

UPS Store
239 E Michigan Avenue, Paw Paw, MI
..........................(269) 657-8080
225 Broadway Street, South Haven, MI
..........................(269) 637-8388

PERSONAL BEAUTY & HYGIENE PRODUCTS

Eleanor’s Pantry
221 Drew Street, Paw Paw, MI
..........................(269) 415-0444
Accepts: un-opened toiletries, baby/adult diapers, etc. | Best to drop-off Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

Household Recycling Collections occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details
Accepts: opened/un-opened perfume, make-up, nail polish, nail polish remover, hair styling products, shampoo, conditioner, lotions, etc.

PESTICIDES, HERBICIDES, FUNGICIDES, INSECTICIDES, AND RODENTICIDES

Clean Sweep Collections occurs twice yearly, see www.berriencounty.org/465/Clean-Sweep-Pesticide-Collections for details

PLASTIC

See RECYCLING CURBSIDE PROGRAMS in this guide.

See RECYCLING DROP-OFF PROGRAMS in this guide.

PROPANE TANKS AND CYLINDERS

Household Recycling Collections occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

AmeriGas Propane
137 Prospect Street, Hartford, MI
..........................(800) 424-1965

PVC

Fryman’s Recycling
300 E Railroad, Street, Dowagiac, MI
..........................(269) 782-0959

SCRAP METAL/SALVAGE

Excludes propane tanks, includes empty fuel tanks.

Clarks Auto Parts & Salvage
56472 Red Arrow Hwy, Lawrence, MI
..........................(269) 674-4905
**COMMUNITY THRIFT SHOP**
1000 E Michigan Avenue, Paw Paw, MI
............................................. (269) 657-4186

**L & L AUTO PARTS AND SALVAGE**
59333 S Lagrave Street, Paw Paw, MI
............................................. (269) 657-5933

**MCPike AUTO SALVAGE**
25172 CR 665, Bloomingdale, MI
............................................. (269) 521-7673

**SOUTH HAVEN RECYCLERS**
3110 67th Street, South Haven, MI
............................................. (269) 637-4828

**SHARPS**
Must be in a Sharps Container or a thick, plastic jug (e.g. detergent bottle) labeled "Sharps"

**DRUG & LABORATORY DISPOSAL**
331 Broad Street, Plainwell, MI
............................................. (800) 685-9824

**HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING COLLECTIONS**
occur twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

**REPUBLIC SHARPS NEEDLE DISPOSAL**
Mail Back Service
republicsharps.com

**SAFE MEDICAL SYSTEMS MAIL BACK**
Sharps Disposal Program
............................................. (877) 723-3633

**SHARPS RECOVERY SYSTEMS**
............................................. (800) 772-5657

**WASTE MANAGEMENT MEDWASTE**
Tracker Safe Solutions
thinkgreenfromhome.com/
SyringesAndLancets.cfm

As a last resort, use a BD Safe-Clip (available at Walmart for less than $10) to nip the needles and discard the full Safe-Clip in the trash. Discard the plastic syringe in the trash.

**SMOKE DETECTORS**
Household Recycling Collections
occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

**SOLVENTS**
Household Recycling Collections
occurs twice yearly, see vanburencd.org/events/list/ for details

**STYROFOAM AND PACKING MATERIALS/PEANUTS**
No food containers.

**UPS STORE**
239 E Michigan Avenue, Paw Paw, MI
............................................. (269) 657-8080
225 Broadway Street, South Haven, MI
............................................. (269) 637-8388

**TIRES**

Dan’s Automotive
56725 M-43 Hwy, Bangor, MI
............................................. (269) 427-1747

DeerPath Recyclers
56625 Woodhouse Drive Dowagiac, MI
............................................. (269) 782-7232

Ericksen’s Garage
73320 M-40 Hwy, Lawton, MI
............................................. (269) 624-1000
Call ahead to schedule drop-off.

SNK Transmission & Auto Repair
22203 M-40 Hwy, Gobles, MI
............................................. (269) 628-0186

Walmart Tire & Lube
201 73rd Street, South Haven, MI
............................................. (269) 639-2360

**VINYL SIDING**

Fryman’s Recycling
300 E Railroad Street, Dowagiac, MI
............................................. (269) 782-0959
**WHEELCHAIRS, CANES, WALKERS, CRUTCHES**

**Hartford Loan Closet**  
19 W Main Street, Hartford, MI  
..............................................(269) 621-4266  

**VFW Posts**  
560 N Phelps Street, Decatur, MI  
..............................................(269) 423-7454  
115 N Niles Street, Paw Paw, MI  
..............................................(269) 657-9954  
1070 Bailey Avenue, South Haven, MI  
..............................................(269) 637-2304

**YARD WASTE**

**Kalamazoo Landscape Supplies**  
5111 S 9th Street, Kalamazoo, MI  
..............................................(269) 375-8000  
Accepts: grass clippings, tree trimmings, and dirt-free leaves | Does not accept: sod or dirt  
See COMPOSTING in this guide.

**LANDFILL PROHIBITED ITEMS**

Residents are prohibited from disposing of the following items in landfills in Michigan. Find appropriate recycling/disposal options in this guide.

- Asbestos
- Beverage containers — Retrieve deposit by returning to the store at which the container was purchased or recycle. See **RECYCLING CURBSIDE PROGRAMS** and **RECYCLING DROP-OFF PROGRAMS** in this guide.
- Compost and yard clippings — See COMPOSTING and **YARD WASTE** in this guide. See **RECYCLING SERVICE PROVIDERS** to find out if your hauler will pick up compostable materials.
- Empty drums — See **DRUMS AND BARRELS** in this guide.
- Hazardous waste
- Lead acid batteries — See **BATTERIES** in this guide.
- Medical waste
- Scrap tires — See **TIRES** in this guide.
- Used oil — See **OIL** in this guide.

**CURBSIDE RECYCLING PROGRAMS**

For a list of companies that provide curbside recycling services in the County, see **RECYCLING SERVICE PROVIDERS** in this guide. The areas listed below are serviced at least in part by the provider(s) listed. Call the service provider to determine which services are available at your home.

**Antwerp Township**  
Waste Management  
..............................................(800) 963-4776  

**Bangor Township**  
Waste Management  
..............................................(800) 963-4776  

**City of Bangor**  
Republic Services  
..............................................(800) 677-1083  
Waste Management  
..............................................(800) 963-4776  

**City of Gobles**  
Republic Services  
..............................................(800) 677-1083  

**City of Hartford**  
Best Way Disposal  
..............................................(269) 463-3232  
Republic Services  
..............................................(800) 677-1083  
Waste Management  
..............................................(800) 963-4776  

**City of South Haven**  
Republic Services  
..............................................(800) 677-1083  

**Covert Township**  
Republic Services  
..............................................(800) 677-1083  

**Decatur Township**  
Michiana Recycling & Disposal  
..............................................(269) 684-0900  

**Keeler Township**  
Michiana Recycling & Disposal  
..............................................(269) 684-0900  

**Porter Township**  
Michiana Recycling & Disposal  
..............................................(269) 684-0900  

**Village of Breedsville**  
Republic Services  
..............................................(800) 677-1083
**Village of Decatur**
- Republic Services ............................................(800) 677-1083
- Waste Management ............................................(800) 963-4776

**Village of Lawton**
- Best Way Disposal ............................................(269) 463-3232
- Republic Services ............................................(800) 677-1083
- Waste Management ............................................(800) 963-4776

**Village of Lawrence**
- Waste Management ............................................(800) 963-4776

**Village of Mattawan**
- Best Way Disposal ............................................(269) 463-3232
- Republic Services ............................................(800) 677-1083
- Waste Management ............................................(800) 963-4776

**Village of Paw Paw**
- Best Way Disposal ............................................(269) 463-3232
- Republic Services ............................................(800) 677-1083
- Waste Management ............................................(800) 963-4776

**RECYCLING DROP-OFF PROGRAMS/TRANSFER STATIONS**

The items that each transfer station will accept will vary, so be sure to call the contact number or the conservation district with any questions. Commonly accepted and recycled items: cardboard, catalogs, glass (blue, green, clear, brown), magazines, metal cans, metal jar lids, newspapers, paper, phonebooks, plastic (#1-#7). The transfer stations typically accept garbage and other items as well.

**Antwerp Township**
- Open to: Antwerp Township residents
- Location: Southwest of Mattawan on the south side of 64th Avenue between CR 657 and 30th Street
- Hours of Operation: Tuesday’s and Saturday’s – 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM
- Accepted Materials: Garbage, Recycling, Yard Waste, Shingles
- Cost associated – contact township hall for details

**Arlington Township**
- Open to: Arlington Township residents
- Location: At the corner of 52nd Street and 26th Avenue, Bangor, MI 49013
- Hours of Operation: Two Dump Days per year
  - Visit http://arlingtontownship.org/index.htm for details
- Accepted Materials: Waste only – no hazardous materials, no recycling, no tires
- Contact: (269) 207-7746
- Cost: Free

**Bangor Township**
- Open to: Bangor Township residents
- Location: 41559 63rd Street, Bangor, MI 49013 (north of CR 376 on 63rd Street)
- Hours of Operation: 1st and 3rd Saturdays – 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM
- Accepted Materials: Waste, Single Stream Recycling, Metal, Tires
- Contact: (269) 427-8965
- Cost: Free

**Columbia Township**
- Open to: Columbia Township residents
- Location: 52 1/2 Street, Breedsville, MI 49027 (a 1/2 mile north of CR 380)
- Hours of Operation: 1st Sunday of the month – 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM and Each Saturday following the 1st weekend of the month – 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
- Accepted Materials: Waste only – no hazardous materials, no recycling, no tires
- Contact: (269) 434-6227
- Cost: (Punch tickets can be picked up and purchased at the transfer station)
  - One free punch card with two punches per resident per year
  - Additional punch tickets – $20 each

**Covert Township**
- Open to: Covert Township residents
- Location: 76890 34th Avenue, Covert, MI (On 34th Avenue 1.25 miles west of M-140 Hwy)
- Hours of Operation: Friday’s 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM (April 1 – October 31), Friday’s 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM (November 1 – March 31), Saturday’s 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM (year-round)
- Accepted Materials: Garbage and Recycling
• Cost associated – contact township hall or purchase at transfer station

Geneva/South Haven Joint

| (800) 677-1083 |
| Open to: Geneva Township and South Haven Township residents |
| Location: On CR 384 East of M-43 Hwy, South Haven, MI |
| Hours of Operation: Saturday’s 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM |
| Accepted Materials: Garbage, Recycling, Yard Waste |
| Obtain free pass at township halls, otherwise cost associated |

Keeler Township

| (269) 621-6481 |
| Open to: Keeler Township residents and Keeler township property owners |
| Location: ½ mile south of Keeler on CR 687 |
| Hours of Operation: Saturday’s 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM (April – October) |
| Accepted Materials: Garbage |
| Cost associated |

Orchard Hill Landfill

| (269) 463-5588 |
| Open to: Van Buren County residents |
| Location: 3290 Hennessey Road, Watervliet, MI |
| Hours of Operation: Monday–Friday 7:00 AM to 4:30 PM, Saturday’s 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM |
| Accepted Materials: Garbage, Recycling, Yard Waste, Large Appliances (non-freon), Tires |
| Cost associated for tires |

Paw Paw Township

| (269) 657-4101 |
| Open to: Van Buren County residents |
| Location: 38016 Red Arrow Hwy, Paw Paw, MI (West of Paw Paw on the north side of Red Arrow Hwy – just past Busy Bee Flea Mall) |
| Hours of Operation: Tuesday’s 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Friday’s 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM (April – September), Saturday’s 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM |
| Accepted Materials: Garbage, Recycling, Brush Waste, Clam Shell Packaging (e.g. strawberries, tomatoes, etc.), Shingles |
| Cost: Free Recycle Pass available to all Paw Paw Township residents |
| Cost associated to all other Van Buren County residents |

Pine Grove Township

• Open to: All Van Buren County residents |
| Location: 15797 32nd Street, Gobles, MI 49055 |
| Hours of Operation: Wednesdays - 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM (March 2 – October 31), Wednesdays – 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM |

(Part of this document is not visible)

South Haven Township

| (269) 637-1591 |
| Open to: South Haven Township residents |
| Location: 200 Aylworth Avenue, South Haven, MI |
| Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Saturday’s 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM |
| Accepted Materials: Recycling, Yard Waste, Sharps, Appliances |
| Cost associated for some items |

RECYCLING SERVICE PROVIDERS

It is important to rinse all containers and remove lids from all containers.

Best Way Disposal

| (269) 463-3232 |
| Accepts: steel cans, aluminum cans, glass bottles (all colors), all paper (including newspaper, office paper, cardboard, magazines and inserts, junk mail, phonebooks, books, paper food containers) plastic bottles and jugs, plastics #1–#7. |

Michiana Recycling & Disposal

| (269) 684-0900 |
| Accepts: paper (including newspaper, office paper, cardboard, magazines and inserts, junk mail, phonebooks, books, paper food containers) colorless glass bottles and jars, metals, plastic bottles, jugs and rigid containers. |

Republic Services

| (800) 677-1083 |
| Accepts: paper (including newspaper, office paper, cardboard, magazines and inserts, junk mail, phonebooks, paper food containers), metals (including aluminum beverage cans, food cans, scrap metal), glass, plastic. |

Waste Management

| (800) 963-4776 |
| Accepts: paper (including newspaper, office paper, cardboard, magazines and inserts, junk mail, phonebooks, paper food containers), metals (including steel cans, tin cans, aluminum cans, foil, bakeware, glass (including clear, brown, and green), plastic (including bottles, jars, and jugs). |
Below is a list of money-saving, safe, and simple solutions to cleaning our homes! Choose plastic-free options for ingredients as often as you can to help reduce your waste as well. Once you’ve made a cleaner, put it in a glass bottle or other reusable container.

**All-Purpose (i.e. countertops, floors, other hard surfaces)**
- Combine 2C white distilled vinegar, 2C water, and 20-30 drops essential oils (optional, see page 23)
- **Tip:** Warm in glass bowl in microwave for dirtier jobs.

**Carpet Freshener**
- Combine 10-20 drops of an essential oil with 1C of baking soda and sprinkle on carpet. Let sit for a couple hours before vacuuming.

**Carpet Stain Remover**
- Combine equal parts white distilled vinegar and water in a spray bottle. Spray on the carpet stain and let sit for 5-10 minutes. Then, clean with a brush or sponge and warm, soapy water.
- For fresh grease spots, sprinkle cornstarch onto spot and wait 15-30 minutes before vacuuming.

**Drain Cleaner**
- **Caution:** Wait for multiple uses of the drain before trying these methods after using a store-bought drain cleaner.
- First, remove as much hair/gunk as you can with tweezers. Next, pour ½ C baking soda down the drain. Then, pour ½ C white vinegar down the drain. After 15 minutes, run hot water down the drain to clear the residue.

**Fabric Softener**
- Purchase reusable wool dryer balls. These are biodegradable, reusable, safe, and effective. Dryer sheets and fabric softener often include toxic chemicals.

**Floor Cleaner**
It is wise to test this on a small portion of your floor before using broadly.
- **Brick and Stone Tiles:** Use a mixture of 1C white vinegar in 1-gallon of warm water. Rinse with water.
- **Linoleum/Vinyl:** Use a mixture of 1C vinegar, 1-gallon warm water, and a few drops of olive oil.
- **Painted Wood:** Use a mixture of 1t of washing soda and 1-gallon warm water.
- **Wood:** Use a mixture of ¾ C vinegar and ½ C warm water to clean. Apply a thin coat of a 1:1 mixture of vegetable oil: vinegar to polish.

**Glass/Mirrors**
- Clean with a mixture of 2t white vinegar and 1 quart of warm water. Use a cotton cloth or black & white newspapers to clean and avoid streaks caused by paper towels. Alternatively, dampen one microfiber cloth with water, clean the surface, and then dry the surface with a dry microfiber cloth.

**Shower/Tub/Tile**
- Rub in baking soda with a damp sponge and rinse with water. For really tough jobs, spray surface with a 1:1 mixture of vinegar: water first, and then rub in baking soda with a damp sponge and rinse with water.

**Toilet Bowl**
- Sprinkle with baking soda, and then drizzle with vinegar. Let the mixture soak for 30 minutes before scrubbing with a reusable toilet bowl brush.
When buying store-bought cleaners, be aware of these terms and ingredients. Avoid harmful ingredients as often as you can, store products away from children and pets, and use the appropriate protective wear when using cleaning products. Do your own research about ingredients as you come across them and always use with caution as research findings continue and sometimes change!

Active Ingredients
Why: Often contain pesticides that harm aquatic life and cause allergic reactions.

Antibacterial
Why: Often contain pesticides that harm aquatic life and can lead to bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics.

Biodegradable
Why: The use of the term is unregulated so we cannot know that the product is safer than others without the label. Some products that biodegrade still remain in the environment as a harmful substance.

Chlorine-free/Bleach Alternative
Why: Oxygen bleach is usually used in these products and is still harmful to our lungs and skin and the environment. When bleach is desired, these products are better than chlorine bleach but should still be used with caution and as sparingly as possible.

Corrosive/Caustic
Why: Can cause serious burns to eyes, lungs, and skin. Bleach, oven cleaners, and drain cleaners are often labeled in this way.

Enzymes
Why: Harmful to workers who manufacture products with enzymes. Enzymes have not been shown to harm users of the products, but they should be used with caution because of the harm seen at the manufacturing level. Additionally, boric acid is often used to stabilize enzymes in products, and boric acid is harmful to reproductive systems.

### Store-Bought Cleaners

#### Active Ingredients

**Why:** Often contain pesticides that harm aquatic life and cause allergic reactions.

**Antibacterial**

**Why:** Often contain pesticides that harm aquatic life and can lead to bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics.

**Biodegradable**

**Why:** The use of the term is unregulated so we cannot know that the product is safer than others without the label. Some products that biodegrade still remain in the environment as a harmful substance.

**Chlorine-free/Bleach Alternative**

**Why:** Oxygen bleach is usually used in these products and is still harmful to our lungs and skin and the environment. When bleach is desired, these products are better than chlorine bleach but should still be used with caution and as sparingly as possible.

**Corrosive/Caustic**

**Why:** Can cause serious burns to eyes, lungs, and skin. Bleach, oven cleaners, and drain cleaners are often labeled in this way.

**Enzymes**

**Why:** Harmful to workers who manufacture products with enzymes. Enzymes have not been shown to harm users of the products, but they should be used with caution because of the harm seen at the manufacturing level. Additionally, boric acid is often used to stabilize enzymes in products, and boric acid is harmful to reproductive systems.

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### Homemade Clothing Stain Removers

**All-Purpose Clothing Stain Remover**

Add 1 ¾ C water to a spray bottle. Swirl in ¼ C Dr. Bronner’s Sal Suds (no substitutes). Spray on clothing stains before laundering normally.

**Coffee/Tea Stains**

Immediately pour boiling water over stain until it goes away. If stain is set, scrub with a paste of borax and water and wash immediately.

**Dingy Whites/Underarm Stains**

Soak the stain in a 1:1 hydrogen peroxide (3%):water mixture for 30 minutes. Then, add 1C hydrogen peroxide to the wash mixture and let sit for another 10 minutes. Finish by washing as normal. For tough stains, make a hydrogen peroxide and baking soda paste to scrub the stain with. Leave paste on stain for 5 minutes before rinsing off and washing as normal.

**Grass Stains**

Scrub with liquid dish soap or treat with a 1:1 hydrogen peroxide (3%):water mixture.

**Grease and Oil Stains**

Sprinkle the stain with baking soda to soak up excess grease/oil and then brush off. Next, soak in white vinegar for 15 minutes, rinse, and scrub with liquid dish soap. Finally, wash as normal.

**Mud Stains**

Let the mud dry and then brush off loose dirt. Then, scrub with a paste of borax and water and wash immediately.

**Protein-based Stains** (e.g. blood, egg, gelatin, glue, poop, urine, vomit)

Soak in cool water and then wash with a mixture of ½ C hydrogen peroxide and ½ C baking soda in the washing machine.

**Tip:** Do not use warm water as this will set in the smell.

**Tomato-based Stains**

Spray white vinegar directly on the stain and wash immediately.
Essential Oils
Why: Can be harmful to humans and pets at varying concentrations. Never apply pure essential oils to human or animal skin; dilute essential oils appropriately. Do your research about essential oils benefits and harms for humans and pets before diffusing or using in cleaning products.

Tip: Some essential oils that are gentler for pets include lavender, rosemary, chamomile, and cedarwood.

Fragrance/Dye
Why: Often is a mixture of multiple substances that have not undergone extensive safety testing.

Inert
Why: Can contribute to skin and lung irritation. Though inert substances do not contain pesticides, they are often still petroleum-based and/or contain preservatives and fragrances.

Natural/Plant-based
Why: Can be misleading only because the use of the words is not regulated. Additionally, though it probably indicates that less petroleum-based substances were used, it is often unclear how much of the product is natural/plant-based.

Non-toxic
Why: Does not mean non-harmful to people or the environment. The term is not standardized, so it isn’t overly helpful when choosing products.

Optical Brightener
Why: Can cause skin irritation and harm aquatic life. This is sometimes included in laundry detergents and works by coating clothes even after washing.

Organic
Why: Can be misleading because the use of the word is not regulated. If a product is marked “Certified Organic," then it is legally obligated to be made with products that were not raised with pesticides. Some marketers use the word “organic” to mean made of carbon, which would include petroleum-based substances.

Pesticide
Why: Can be harmful to people, pets, and aquatic life. Pesticides are usually added to kill bacterium, viruses, and fungi, but if a product without pesticides can disinfect, consider choosing it instead.

Phosphate-free
Why: Phosphates have been banned in 25 states (including Michigan) because of toxic algae blooms in bodies of water, so the term is unneeded in some regards but still helpful to know.

Sensitizing
Why: Can cause allergic reactions and asthma attacks after repeated exposure.

Solvent
Why: Can cause respiratory impairment, neurological impairment, reproductive and developmental harm, and cancer. Solvents are particularly harmful to the environment too, so be sure to dispose of them at Household Recycling Collections.

Surfactant
Why: Can be toxic to aquatic life and breakdown slowly. Some are safe to use and are necessary for breaking down grease and loosening dirt. Be sure to research these to find safer surfactants.

Toxic
Why: Harmful to the environment or to people if inhaled, swallowed, or absorbed through the skin. If a product is labeled as toxic, be sure that it discloses which ingredients are toxic so you can learn the harms associated before purchasing.

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC’s)
Why: Contaminate the air and contribute to smog and are related to severe health effects.
Your resource for helping clean up our earth.

For additional information about recycling, please contact:
Van Buren Conservation District
1035 E Michigan Ave.
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269.657.4030 x5
VanBurenCD.org

Due to continuing change, it is recommended that you call the companies listed before using their services to ensure that their printed information is still accurate.