Hazardous waste is waste that poses a direct threat and danger to human health and/or the environment. Hazardous waste can be toxic, flammable, explosive, and/or infectious.

Some hazardous waste examples:
- Clinical/medical wastes - e.g. used needles, medicines, stained bandages (dirty) with blood or other body fluids (possibly infectious);
- Waste oils/water, hydrocarbon/water mixtures (usually leaking from boats and vehicles);
- Wastes from the use of resins, latex, plasticizers, glues/adhesives (often found in construction waste);
- Wastes resulting from surface treatment of metals and plastics - e.g. stain, paint and dye residues;
- Residues arising from industrial waste disposal operations - e.g. chemicals, insulation materials;
- Electronic and electrical waste (they usually contain certain dangerous compounds like mercury, lead, cadmium, zinc, copper);
- Dead animals and body parts (other than food residues).

If you are not sure whether the waste is hazardous or not, always consider it as hazardous and let the experts decide later.

What to do when you encounter hazardous waste?
- The best option is not to touch the hazardous waste. Instead mark the place, take a photo if you can and call in experts to handle them.
- Don’t open closed bottles and containers. Keep them leak-proof and vapour tight.
- Don’t tear electronic devices apart.
- **We only recommend that you take electric and electronic waste with you** (wear gloves to be safe). Collect these items separate from rest of the waste.

If there are no experts in your area and you need to store hazardous waste yourself, make sure that you:
- Store all materials properly, not too close to each other, and in ventilated, dry, cool areas.
- Keep storage areas free from accumulated materials that cause tripping, fires, or explosions, or that may attract rats and other pests.

By no means burn hazardous waste, it is extremely dangerous and life threatening!

For more info on health-care and waste, you can look up info from the World Health Organization [here](https://www.who.int). Another great resource is the HCWH (Health Care Without Harm) [website](https://www.hcwh.org), which includes info, tools and documents on health care, chemicals etc.

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Questions and inquiries: info@letsdoitworld.org

www.worldcleanupday.org