

# VOTE YES FOR HOUSE BILL 67:

## Extended Producer Responsibility for Household Hazardous Waste in Vermont

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) includes any household products that are toxic, poisonous, reactive, corrosive, or flammable. Because these products are so common and easy to purchase, many people forget that HHW can be extremely harmful to their health and the environment. Vermont municipalities are required by law to keep HHW out of landfill-bound trash **to protect Vermont's water quality and human health**. Municipalities do this by operating special collection events or facilities around the state, paid for by towns and Solid Waste Management Entities (SWMEs).

### Problems with the Current System

**1. Costs of collecting HHW are increasing dramatically.** HHW collection costs have increased more than 50% for some municipalities due to a limited number of service providers, and labor and supply chain shortages. In 2022, municipalities spent more than \$2.2 million on these vital services with some Vermont towns spending between \$100-\$400 to manage a single carload of household chemicals. These cost increases are not sustainable. Municipalities face increased pressure to charge collection fees at events, which can drive residents to store dangerous chemicals at home, hide chemicals in their trash, pour them down the drain, or dump them illegally on Vermont's landscape and waterways.

**2. Producers of hazardous products are not invested in Vermont's environment.** Vermont municipalities have no influence on how products are made but are responsible for managing them when they become waste. HHW is the most

toxic portion of the waste stream and the most expensive to manage, but producers have no stake in their end-of-life management. Those who profit from their products should be responsible for minimizing their environmental impact.

**3. Vermont municipalities are doing a good job, but much more needs to be done.** Despite our efforts, it's estimated that 855 tons of HHW is still being disposed into Vermont's

landfill each year. Cost-cutting measures have resulted in fewer collection events. Without producer support, public participation and collection rates will begin to fall. Municipalities require a reliable funding source to increase collection and keep toxic chemicals out of the environment.

### The Solution: Extended Producer Responsibility for HHW (H.67)

H. 67 establishes an EPR program for HHW in which producers of hazardous products form a Stewardship Organization (SO) that will assume responsibility for the cost of collection and disposal of their unwanted leftover products. The SO will use existing HHW programs in Vermont and add additional collections if necessary to meet specific performance goals.



**Above: A Busy HHW Collection Event in Lamolle County**

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## WHAT EPR FOR HHW WILL DO

- ▲ Cost of collection and disposal will be covered for municipalities resulting in an annual savings to Vermont residents and businesses of approximately \$2.2 million. This will allow Vermont municipalities to direct more resources toward residential recycling and food scrap diversion to save diminishing landfill capacity.
- ▲ The EPR program also includes increased education and outreach, which will bolster HHW collections and keep more of these toxic chemicals out of Vermont's environment.
- ▲ Small businesses that currently pay for disposal of leftover chemicals will have these costs eliminated under this program.
- ▲ EPR for HHW brings producers to the table to develop a plan that creates cleaner land and water for all Vermonters. Producers of these products will now have a stake in making Vermont a healthier place to live, and this incentivizes the manufacturers to develop less toxic products.

***Vermont retailers would not have any responsibility under this EPR program.  
There will be no fee on products at retail locations.***

### Extended Producer Responsibility is Successful in Vermont

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a proven solution in Vermont for the sustainable end-of-life management of materials that are difficult or expensive to divert from the waste stream. **Vermont's existing EPR programs for electronics, mercury lamps and thermostats, paint, and batteries are tremendously successful.** These programs are popular with Vermonters who enjoy the increased collection convenience at no cost, resulting in some of the highest collection rates for these materials in the US.

#### What Products are Covered in H.67?

Any hazardous product that isn't already collected as part of a EPR program in Vermont would be covered by H. 67, including the following:

✓ Adhesives	✓ Lubricants/degreasers
✓ Aerosols	✓ Mineral Spirits
✓ Automotive chemicals	✓ Non-refillable propane cylinders
✓ Cleaning solutions	✓ Paint thinners/removers
✓ Furniture strippers	✓ Pool/hot tub chemicals
✓ Hobby/craft supplies	✓ Rust remover
✓ Acids	✓ Tar and bug remover
✓ Lighter fluid	✓ Turpentine

**Questions?** Contact your local solid waste representative: <https://dec.vermont.gov/waste-management/solid/local-districts>