

Hazardous waste dealt with in haste

Fewer attend hazardous disposal day

By JOANN MALINZEWKI
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STAFF WRITERS

Despite fewer cars at Saturday's five-hour Household Hazardous Waste Day, two cars had lined up ready to unload an hour before the 9 a.m. opening.

"We had about 20 cars in line (by 9 a.m.). We thought we were going to get slammed," said Karen Birkholz, Farmington-Farmington Hills recycling coordinator.

That didn't happen. Approximately two-thirds fewer cars participated in the first disposal event of the year. Two disposal days are scheduled annually in the spring and fall.

Compared to the 938 cars in the October 1991 event, only 384 participated Saturday at Nissan Research & Development, which hosted the event, in the Country Club Corporate Park at 12 Mile and Haggerty.

Birkholz isn't convinced it was the location — generally it's at the 47th District Court in Farmington — as much as it was the first Saturday of nice weather and that many people have gotten rid of their household hazardous waste already.

"People have cleaned out. They won't have stuff every year," Birkholz said.

Farmington City Manager Robert Deadman agreed. "Hopefully, it was because the first two (special collection days) were heavily attended, and people have cleaned out the old paint from their garages," he said.

Still, Farmington councilman Richard Tupper wondered whether the north side location discouraged some Farmington residents from attending. The October household

hazardous day will return to the 47th District Court parking lot.

Officials concerned

City officials are concerned that some southern Farmington residents did not receive their mailing about the event until Friday or Saturday after it was over. Officials reported they took the bulk mailing to the post office on April 22 — 10 days before the event.

Of the total 384 cars that participated Saturday, 60 percent were first-time users. Also of the 384 cars, 305 or 79 percent were from Farmington Hills, while 79 or 21 percent were from Farmington.

Obviously, with fewer cars, total amounts of materials collected were down, as well. The following amounts were collected compared to the October, 1991 collection day:

- Aerosol cans (measurement given in 55 gallon drums filled): Saturday, 5; October, 1991, 9.

- Asbestos (in 55 gallon drums): Saturday, 1; October, 1991, 2.

- Bulk paint (in 55 gallon drums): Saturday, 8; October, 1991, 25.

- Latex paint (measurement given in gallons): Saturday, 350; October, 1991, 6,000.

- Lab jacks (gallons): Saturday, 860; October, 1991, 1,851.

- Motor oil (gallons): Saturday, 250. In the past, motor oil was bulked with other material in a separate figure for October, 1991, is not available.

- Car batteries: Saturday, 36; October, 1991, 2,400 pounds.

Items unwanted and wanted

the proper barrel, then "toss the empty jug — incorrectly — into the recycling bin full of plastic. That would force garbage hauler Waste Management of Michigan to take an entire load of plastic jugs to a landfill, rendering useless the good intentions of hundreds of people."

Residents of single family homes in both cities are participating in a curbside recycling program, but those in multiple family residences, like apartments, and business and commercial users may still take items to the central recycling centers located at the cities' public works yards.

Participation in the curbside program is "beyond our expectations," Deadman added. He said once the entire community is involved with the recycling effort, the cities will likely do away with the recycling centers.

Farmington councilman Richard Tupper said he was shocked to hear that 18 tons of garbage is taken

from Farmington each week and 89 tons is taken from Farmington Hills.

That's a lot of garbage," he said. "This recycling is a very important thing, and we all need to participate."

At a city council meeting Monday night, mention was made of the "bug and tag" program being considered in several communities, including Berkley. Such programs force residents to recycle by making them pay for garbage pick-up and per-bag cost.

Mayor William Hartsock said he had heard that in similar programs actual garbage collected is down to one bag per household, on the average.

But Deadman said those programs could cause problems. People might attempt to put non-recyclable materials in the recycling chain to lessen their garbage load and the fees they would pay, he added.

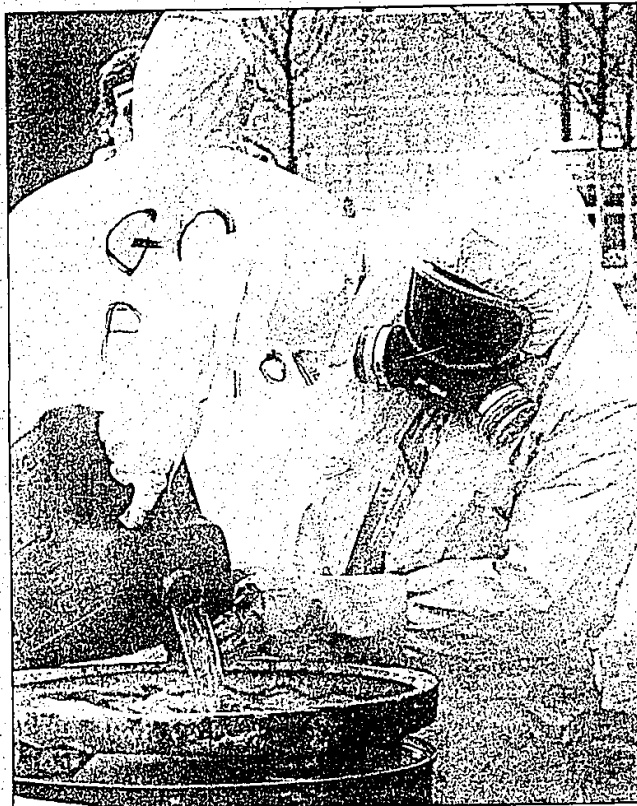
Unlike past collection events, city officials this year asked residents not to take latex paints to the household hazardous waste day. Latex paint is not hazardous and if left to dry can be disposed of in solid form with the rest of your rubbish.

Also unlike past collection events, the cities collected motor oil and car batteries themselves to sell directly rather than give them to Chemical Waste Management, which collected the materials Saturday. "We cut out the middleman. It's a cost-saving measure," said Dan Rooney, Farmington Hills public works department supervisor.

As promised, Chemical Waste Management was on hand to help residents at the site with their materials. The company is a division of Waste Management Inc., with which Farmington and Farmington Hills contracts for solid waste collection and disposal.

The disposal day is part of the cities' contract with Waste Management. It's also a costly event. In the proposed 1992-93 Farmington Hills budget, \$80,500 has been allocated for the city's cost of the two disposal days.

The day is designed to protect the environment as well as to encourage recycling, which has been considered successful. In Farmington Hills, for example, the amount of waste taken to landfills since recycling began in July, 1991, has been reduced by 30 percent. The 1992-93 proposed budget also reflects recycling costs — for the first time — which has increased from \$2.2 million budgeted this year to \$3.2 million for the coming year.



Down the drain: The joint effort of the cities allows people the alternative of pouring toxic waste down the drain. Field technician Ed Sanchez pours gasoline into a drum.

Contaminants turning up at center

By CAREY HANS
STAFF WRITER

Although the recycling programs in Farmington and Farmington Hills are going well, officials are concerned that people using city-owned recycling centers are disposing contaminated materials.

"If they're contaminating the loads, they (the loads) get rejected" and have to be taken to a landfill, said Farmington City Manager Robert Deadman, who also heads a regional recycling and solid waste authority for southwest Oakland County.

"They are contaminating the good work of others," he said. "Not only is there an environmental concern, but an additional cost to the cities." It's then been very expensive and a wasted effort," he added.

For example, Deadman said, someone bringing oil to the center in a milk jug may empty that jug in



Separating refuse: Waste Management technicians (from left) Mike Halterman, Laura Williams, James Young and Kevin Tulley handle the waste brought in from the garages and basements of residents of Farmington and Farmington Hills.

Halsted to be closed this weekend

Halsted Road, at 12 Mile south to Enterprise Court in Farmington Hills, will be closed from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday, May 9, according to David Call, assistant city manager.

Rainbow Construction, a subcontractor for Tony Angelo Cement,

will construct storm sewers and water mains across the roadway and will be able to proceed earlier if the road is closed.

Signs will be posted telling people to detour Halsted by taking Hills Tech to Haggerty Road. Access on Halsted, however, will be

maintained for the 2-3 homeowners on the roadway, Call said. Emergency personnel will be notified of the closure.

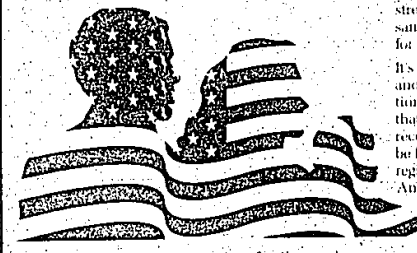
If it rains Saturday, the road will remain closed Sunday to allow crews to finish the work.

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