

Hazardous waste collection day to be held at Boone May 4

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If you've been holding on to some old chemicals or medications and are not quite sure what to do with them, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation might have just the solution for you.

The TDEC's mobile household hazardous waste collection service will be heading to Washington County on May 4 from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. at Daniel Boone High School, 1440 Suncrest Drive in Gray.

According to a TDEC news release, the mobile household hazardous waste collection service was started in 1993 and has disposed of more than 20 million pounds of hazardous material, which are items considered flammable, toxic, reactive and/or corrosive and cannot be placed in the regular garbage.

Charles Baines, director of solid waste and recycling at the Washington County Solid Waste Department, said the mobile collections service visits the county each year.

"They come into each county and they do a hazardous waste collection ... in one day. They collect all of the stuff that we don't take during the week at the convenience centers — pesticides, chemicals, old gasoline, kerosene," Baines said. "All you do is drive in the parking lot and pop your trunk lid open and the contractors that the state (contracted) to do this ... they pick it up, get it out of your car and unload it for you and take care of it. They put it in special containers and barrels and ... load it on a big truck."

According to the release, items that will be accepted at the collections day include cleaning fluids, pesticides, mercury thermometers and ther-

mostats, fluorescent bulbs, lithium and button batteries, aerosols, adhesives, medications, brake fluid, swimming pool chemicals and paint thinner.

Items that will not be accepted include ammunition, explosives, alkaline batteries, paint, electronics, medical waste and any items from a school, commercial business or agri-business.

"We take paint all the time, so they won't take paint, oil or antifreeze or rechargeable batteries or car batteries. They won't take the stuff that we take every day at the convenience centers," Baines said. "We usually have a real good turnout, but since we've started taking so much of the stuff now, daily, at the convenience centers, recycling centers, there's not near as many people ... (that) come out that day because they don't have that much stuff ... to get rid of."

He said the one-day only hazardous waste collections are important because it keeps harmful chemicals and items away from areas where they shouldn't be.

"(The collection service) protects the environment from all of the damage that could be caused from the chemicals," Baines said. "It gets all of these chemicals and things that might wind up in the landfill or dumped outside."

According to the release, materials being taken to the collections site should be in sturdy boxes lined with newspaper to prevent spills and cross-contamination, and all hazardous material should be kept away from children and pets.

Hazardous materials should be kept in their original containers, but if not, should be placed in a plastic jug with a secure lid and the contents should be labeled on the jug.

For more information on the household hazardous waste mobile collection service, call 800-287-9013 or visit www.tn.gov/environment/swm/hhw.

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