

# KING COUNTY SWAC

Solid Waste Advisory Committee

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August 15, 2014

The Honorable Larry Phillips  
Chair, King County Council  
516 Third Avenue, Room 1200  
Seattle, WA 98104

RE: Support for Paint Stewardship Legislation

Dear Council Chair Phillips:

I am writing to express the King County Solid Waste Advisory Committee's (SWAC) support for paint stewardship legislation, which authorizes manufacturers selling paint in Washington to provide a take-back program for unwanted latex and oil-based architectural paint. This legislation is supported by paint manufacturers, who have been actively working with local governments, solid waste management companies and other stakeholders on this bill.

Architectural paint is one of the largest and most expensive waste streams for our household hazardous waste (HHW) programs. Currently, local governments are the primary collectors of unwanted paint in Washington. In 2009, King County stopped collecting latex paint but continues to collect oil-based paint at its HHW facilities at a cost of \$152,164 for 392,650 gallons in 2013. A 2013 King County Waste Characterization study estimated that 1,326 tons of latex paint was disposed of in the county's landfills at a time when we are trying to extend the life of our landfill.

In 2010, Washington local government programs collected more than 507,000 gallons of paint, which is only 38 percent of the unwanted paint available for collection, according to estimates by the Washington State Department of Ecology.

Currently, 16 counties, which represent 60 percent of the state population, do not accept latex paint from residents. Those that collect latex paint are concerned that they cannot continue funding programs in the future. When managed improperly, unwanted paint poses risks to human health and the environment. Oil-based paint is toxic and flammable. In order to prevent spills curbside, in the street, in garbage trucks, and at

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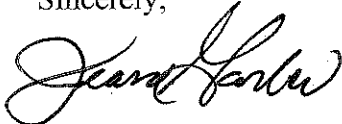
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transfer stations, liquid latex paint is prohibited from many residential garbage programs. Moreover, paint is made of materials that could be captured for reuse, recycling, or energy recovery. Paint stewardship legislation would establish a statewide take back and recycling program coordinated by paint manufacturers and funded through a small assessment on paint sold in Washington. The program would expand the number of collection sites for both oil and latex paint and would greatly boost the amount of paint collected and recycled. Residents, as well as small quantity generators, could return their unwanted paint to convenient collection locations at no cost and the paint would be properly managed.

This legislation is supported by the American Coatings Association (ACA), which has collaborated with many local and state governments, businesses, and solid waste management companies across the state to create effective legislation. In 2009, a pilot program to collect unwanted paint was established in Oregon and in 2013, the state passed legislation to make the program permanent. Similar legislation has passed in California, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Maine, Minnesota, Vermont and Colorado. The program is now operational in Oregon, California, Connecticut, Vermont and Rhode Island. Paint stewardship legislation was first proposed in Washington State in 2012, and we hope to see it prioritized for passage in the 2015 legislative session.

The King County SWAC respectfully urges the King County Council's active support for paint stewardship legislation to provide a convenient and safe return program for unwanted paint. The industry-supported legislation could greatly reduce costs for local governments, increase collection opportunities, increase recycling and recovery, and reduce improper disposal of a hazardous and hard-to-handle material.

Sincerely,



Jean Garber, Chair  
King County Solid Waste Advisory Committee

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Carolyn Busch, Interim Chief of Staff

Anne Norris, Clerk of Council

Frank Abe, Director of Communications

Christie True, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)

Pat D. McLaughlin, Division Director, Solid Waste Division