



## Kittitas County Solid Waste Programs

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February 6, 2013

Senator Janéa Holmquist Newbry  
106B Irv Newhouse Building  
PO Box 40413  
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Senator Holmquist Newbry

I am writing to express Kittitas County's support for legislation that authorizes manufacturers, selling paint in Washington, to provide a take-back and recycling program for unwanted latex and oil-based architectural paint. This legislation is supported by the paint manufacturers who have been actively working with local governments on this bill.

Currently, local governments are the primary collectors of unwanted paint in Washington. Architectural paint is the largest and most expensive waste stream for our moderate risk waste (MRW) programs. In 2010, Washington local government programs collected more than 507,000 gallons of paint, which is only 38% of the unwanted paint available for collection, according to estimates by the Department of Ecology. The cost to Washington taxpayers and garbage ratepayers was approximately 3 million dollars.

Currently, Kittitas County, along with 15 other counties, do not accept latex paint from residents, which represents 60 percent of the state population. Those that collect latex paint are concerned that they cannot continue funding these programs in the future. Eight counties do not have permanent MRW collection sites for paint. This leaves the residence of Washington State with limited options for the proper disposal of left over latex paint.

When managed improperly, unwanted paint poses risks to human health and the environment. Oil-based paint is toxic and flammable. Latex paint, in liquid form, is prohibited from many residential garbage programs to prevent spills curbside, in the street, in garbage trucks, and at transfer stations. Moreover, paint is made of materials that could be captured for reuse, recycling, or energy recovery.

Proposed legislation would establish a statewide 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 painting and general contractors, could return their unwanted paint to convenient collections locations at no cost and the paint would be properly managed.

This legislation is supported by the American Coatings Association (ACA). They have collaborated with many local and state governments, businesses, and refuse and recycling companies across the country to create this meaningful legislation. In 2009, "model" legislation was passed in Oregon as a demonstration project. Oregon consumers now have 102 paint collection sites, up from 15 sites in 2009 and 94% of residents live within 15 miles of a permanent collection site. Oregon local governments have seen direct cost savings including approximately \$1 million per year in savings for Portland Metro alone. Since 2010, similar stewardship legislation has been enacted in California, Connecticut, and Rhode Island.

Kittitas County Solid Waste respectfully urges your support for this legislation that would provide a convenient and safe return program for unwanted paints. This industry-supported legislation would greatly reduce costs for local governments, increase collection opportunities, increase recycling and recovery, and reduce improper disposal of a hazardous material.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Patti Johnson", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Patti Johnson  
Solid Waste Director