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CONTACT: Dona Neely, donaneely@ecostardevens.com, 978-772-8831 x3304

New Facility Provides Better Management of Household Hazardous Waste

A new regional service will make it easier for residents to properly dispose of toxic waste, provide additional protection to drinking water supplies, and deliver operational and financial savings to the participating municipalities.

Typically towns host a household hazardous waste collection event once or twice a year. This routine forces home owners to store unwanted harmful products such as pesticides, fertilizers, oil-based paint, auto fluids, etc., for a lengthy period of time before they can safely dispose of it. Improper disposal of these products can threaten the health of children, pets, and the environment. Additionally, annual collections mean long lines, often with a waiting time that exceeds an hour - that's if the date is convenient with the homeowner's schedule.

With the opening of the Devens Regional Household Hazardous Products Collection Center residents of Ayer, Bolton, Devens, Groton, Harvard, Lancaster, Littleton, Lunenburg, and Townsend will have 20 opportunities per year to properly manage toxic waste such as unused floor cleaners, leftover pool chemicals, and button batteries. Disposal fees for residents of member towns will be \$40 for up to 10 gallons or 10 pounds of material (half car) or \$60 for up to 25 gallons or 25 pounds of product. Residents are encouraged to partner with neighbors to achieve savings.

In addition to the nine towns' combined residential population of approximately 65,000, the Collection Center will also assist businesses that do not create toxic waste in their daily operations or do not exceed DEP's threshold for Very Small Quantity Generators (VSQGs) and generate less than 220 pounds (approximately 27 gallons) of ignitable, corrosive, reactive, toxic, or hazardous waste or waste oil per month and no acutely hazardous waste. The estimated 300 firms that could benefit from this new service are required to pre-register via email or phone; disposal fees will be based on the materials being managed.

The regional service will also ease municipal budget constraints. Towns spend thousands of dollars to staff annual household hazardous waste collection days and arrange for the disposal of products that require special handling. The facility will eliminate the need for municipal staff to field urgent calls for help with disposal of hazardous waste or to retrieve abandoned waste and is expected to save each member community an average of \$10,000 annually.

The Devens Regional Household Hazardous Products Collection Center is located at 9 Cook Street, behind the public works building. The facility will be open 9:00a-noon on Wednesday and Saturday of the first full week of the month, beginning August 3 and 6; operations will take place March through December. Additional information regarding location, collection dates and items accepted can be found at www.devenshhw.com or by emailing info@devenshhw.com or calling 978-501-3943.