

Lifecycle/Cost Benefit Analysis for Leftover Paint Management
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Leftover paint management has been identified as a high priority by state and local government officials because of its high volume in the waste stream; potential to impact human health and the environment; subsequent costs to manage; and the potential for increased recovery, reuse, and recycling. The Product Stewardship Institute, a national non-profit organization, initiated a national dialogue, the Paint Product Stewardship Initiative (PPSI), focused on leftover paint management in 2002. With the support of dialogue participants from over 60 companies, industry associations, and government agencies, the dialogue resulted in a Memorandum of Understanding, outlining work on numerous projects over a specified period of time that will serve as the basis for developing a nationally coordinated paint management system.

One of the key projects, an Environmental Life-Cycle Assessment/Economic Cost Benefit Analysis (LCA/CBA), was implemented in order to provide information and data on the most cost-effective, efficient, and environmentally sound systems for managing leftover paint. Specifically, the LCA/CBA will determine whether the lifecycle benefit from reusing or recycling latex paint outweighs the costs, and how these costs and benefits compare to disposing of the latex paint. Thus, the LCA/CBA undertook to scientifically evaluate the environmental and economic lifecycle costs and benefits of managing leftover paint through six specific management scenarios, ranging from simple drying/solid waste disposal to reuse and recycling.

The National Paint and Coatings Association, along with one of the PPSI government partners, the California Department of Toxic Substance Control, would present a comparison of the LCA/CBA results focusing on the environmental and economic lifecycle costs and benefits of managing leftover paint.