

## **Remember, it's not just toxic to you...**

Did you know that many household products are dangerous to our kids, pets, and the environment? These materials pollute our waterways if washed or dumped into storm drains or roadside ditches that lead directly to our lakes and rivers. Household cleaners, pesticides, gasoline, antifreeze, used motor oil, and other hazardous products need to be labeled, stored, and disposed of properly.

So what can you do to help? Simple. Here are some steps you can take to carefully dispose of household wastes and help keep our water clean.

**Identify it.** Be aware of household products that can harm children, pets, and the environment. The words “danger,” “caution,” “warning,” or “toxic” indicate that you need to be careful in how you use and dispose of the product.

**Less is better.** Reduce waste and save money by purchasing only the materials you need. When possible, choose less toxic alternatives. For example, try cleaning your windows with vinegar and water.

**Store properly.** Keep unused products in their original containers with labels intact. Select cool, dry storage areas that are away from children, pets, and wildlife.

**Disposal is key.** Never dump cleaners, chemicals, motor oil, and other toxic materials down storm drains, roadside ditches, sinks, or on the ground. Contact your local community for household hazardous waste disposal locations, guidelines, and dates.

For more easy steps on protecting our lakes and rivers, visit [www.semcog.org](http://www.semcog.org). Remember, our water is our future – and it's ours to protect.