

Home remodeling for residents

Adding a new deck? Slapping on a new coat of paint? Finally fixing the roof? When improving your home, you can reduce, reuse and recycle, saving money and protecting the environment as well.

Make a plan

Before you begin a house project, consult the DNR's [Planning Your Demolition or Renovation Project \[PDF\]](#), a step-by-step checklist for evaluating hazards, keeping your home and family safe and providing recycling and waste disposal options. Although the checklist is geared toward commercial and industrial projects, it still provides helpful information for homeowners. It is also available in [Spanish \[PDF\]](#). Additional information can be found on the DNR's [construction and demolition pages](#).

Conserve paints and stains

The easiest way to avoid wasting paint is by purchasing only as much as you need for the job. If you have leftover paint, find use for it in other projects or share it with a neighbor. Paint and stain outdoors with dark colors that will not need excessive cleaning or re-coating over the years.



Find uses for leftover paint. Leftover oil-based paints are considered a household hazardous waste

Dispose of leftovers safely

Check product labels to see if you are using hazardous materials and be sure to store them safely, reuse them when able and dispose of them properly.

- Water-based and latex paints are generally non-toxic but should be air-dried (or mixed with an absorbent like kitty litter) until solid before being placed in the trash.
- Solvent-based or oil-based paints are toxic and flammable and can contaminate drinking water if disposed of improperly. They should be treated as [household hazardous waste](#).

The DNR's [Household HazWaste Management Guide \[PDF\]](#) is an easy reference sheet for determining how to dispose of various household products. [Contact your local collection sites \[PDF\]](#) to learn whether they accept paints, solvents, stains and household cleaning products. You can also use the program search tool at the [Solid & Hazardous Waste Education Center \[exit DNR\]](#).

Roofing

If you are re-roofing a house, you may be able to [recycle your asphalt shingles](#). Check with your roofing contractor to see if they will recycle shingles. Recycled shingles can be used in road repairs and kept out of landfills.



Used asphalt shingles, like these, can be collected and recycled.

Reuse home fixtures

When possible, preserve doors, wood, light and bathroom fixtures, cabinets and other items in good condition that can be reused. Organizations like Habitat ReStore accept these items for reuse in home and other building projects. Other businesses accept scrap wood, metal, carpeting and other products for recycling. See the [Wisconsin Recycling Markets Directory \[exit DNR\]](#) for a searchable list of recyclable materials and drop-off locations.

Recycle home debris

When building up or breaking down, create a designated "to recycle" pile where you can collect wood, plastics, glass and metal items. Some communities and retailers have drop-off sites for recycling materials not collected with general curbside service. For more information on what can be recycled in your community, and where to recycle other materials, see [Recycle More Wisconsin \[exit DNR\]](#) or the [Wisconsin Recycling Markets Directory \[exit DNR\]](#).



Sorting home debris into piles like this one makes it easier to collect and recycle.

Furnishing the addition

The [Green Building Products Guide \[exit DNR\]](#) presents an easy way to find reused and recycled building materials for your project. When furnishing your new addition, consider purchasing used furniture and other furnishings. By purchasing secondhand, you are reducing the need for new materials and saving money!