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## Recycling paint good for state economy, environment

By Andrew Radin, Commentary Published 4:32 pm, Monday, May 22, 2017

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Unless you buy the perfect amount of paint every time, you might be like most New Yorkers and have leftover cans sitting around. You could give it to a friend, or try to use it up. But when you've run out of ideas, wouldn't it be nice to take paint back to a convenient location and know that it's being reused, recycled or properly disposed of?

New York could join eight states and the District of Columbia in providing residents with convenient places to bring their leftover paint under a program run by PaintCare, an industry nonprofit organization. PaintCare has already partnered with more than 1,700 retail locations in these other states, where households and businesses can bring paint for free for reuse, recycling or safe disposal.

### More Information

Andrew Radin is chair of the New York Product Stewardship Council and Recycling and Waste Reduction director for the Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency. Also contributing to this article were Marie Clarke, counsel of the Government Affairs Division of the American Coatings Association, and Scott Cassel, CEO and founder of the Product Stewardship Institute Inc. For more information on PaintCare, go to <https://nypsc.org/paint>.

Approximately 75 percent of paint collected through this program is recycled into high-quality, low-cost paint.

The program is funded by a nominal fee of 75 cents on each new gallon sold. Since the program is managed by the paint industry, governments save millions of dollars by not having to pay for consumer education or to collect and process the leftover paint, although they still oversee the program.

New Yorkers purchase more than 39 million gallons of paint each year and, of that, 3.9 million gallons remain unused.

Despite local government efforts to provide recycling opportunities, most paint ends up sitting in homes for years, or is disposed down household and storm drains or in garbage cans, impacting the environment and wasting valuable resources. PaintCare provides

an environmentally responsible and financially sustainable paint recovery alternative.

The New York Product Stewardship Council, along with 40 local governments, municipal and industry associations, companies, and environmental groups support the paint stewardship bills being debated in the state Senate and

Assembly (S.881 and A.1038). This legislation would allow PaintCare to collect and properly manage post-consumer paint statewide.

These bills benefit the economy, environment and the citizens of New York. Each year, more than \$3.1 million of your taxpayer dollars are used to manage leftover paint – regardless of whether you use paint.

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Local governments use these funds to manage only a small amount of leftover paint; they cannot afford to manage all paint given their limited budgets.

In fact, New York local governments would need to spend \$31 million each year to properly manage all leftover paint generated in the state.

With this legislation's passage, PaintCare could accomplish this – at no cost to local governments or taxpayers, freeing up tax dollars for other uses.

Further, this law will also create recycling jobs – more than 200 jobs have been created nationwide. It's New York's turn to see these benefits.

This legislation is a win-win for the economy, environment and for New Yorkers who want to do the right thing with their leftover paint.

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