



PAINTSHARE GUIDELINES

Keeping paint out of our landfills
and brightening our communities



Product Care Recycling

productcare.org/paintshare

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productcare.org/paintshare

PaintShare is a Product Care program that helps Canadians pick-up leftover or unwanted paint from participating paint recycling locations.

For over two decades, PaintShare has helped keep paint from contaminating our environment by putting it back where it belongs—onto buildings, walls, and into the hands of DIYers and artists.

1.0 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

WHAT IS PAINTSHARE?

The PaintShare program is an environmental initiative that allows consumers to take selected containers of leftover paint from collection sites free of charge. This popular program promotes reuse by providing consumers with quality leftover paint for their small home projects while helping to protect the environment by diverting usable paint from disposal.

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

If you are currently a collection site for Product Care's Paint Recycling Program but not yet participating in PaintShare, sign-up is easy. Product Care will update Appendix A of your standard agreement to include program details. There is no cost to participate, and Product Care provides all necessary materials to get started, including:

- Liability sticker
- Tracking forms
- Site signage
- Storage equipment reimbursement (up to \$100)
- Marketing support and website listing
- Ongoing operational guidance

For contact information, [see Contact & Support page](#) at the end of this guide.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION

For you:

- **Create an additional revenue stream** through Product Care's compensation payments
- **Differentiate yourself from competing businesses** and give customers another reason to visit your location
- **Receive additional exposure** on Product Care's recycling locator, backed by over \$1 million in advertising effort
- **Build customer loyalty** by providing free paint, encouraging return visits (get paid twice: once when customers take leftover paint, and again when they bring back the empty container)
- **Minimal operational impact**—the entire process requires minimal effort beyond your current paint collection activities

For your community:

- **Provide a valuable community service** by offering free paint for small home projects
- **Help the environment** by extending paint life and reducing waste
- **Increase foot traffic** to your location, raising awareness of all your collection services

2.0 SETUP REQUIREMENTS

PHYSICAL SETUP REQUIREMENTS

Location

Incorporating an area for PaintShare should complement, not interfere, with your regular operations. Please identify an area considering regular paint collection and drop-off activities, staff work zones, and safety protocols.

The display should be positioned to meet these requirements:

- Place in a visible and easily accessible location for customers
- Position within the customer-facing area of your site
- Keep separate from tubskid storage
- Ensure the area can be clearly seen by staff at all times
- Consider traffic flow to prevent congestion
- Avoid placement near forklifts or other equipment

Indoor/Outdoor

PaintShare displays can be located within or outside of depots. If an outdoor location is preferred, please ensure the display is covered in regions prone to wet or winter conditions. Keep stickers and forms from being damaged. If you choose an outdoor location, you may consider running the PaintShare program seasonally when paint won't be susceptible to freezing.

Storage and display options

You have flexibility in how you present PaintShare paint to customers. Acceptable solutions include a shelving unit (recommended minimum: 48"L x 36"Dx75"H), a rolling cart, or table.

Product Care will reimburse up to \$100 toward the purchase of storage equipment for your display. Simply submit your receipt, and the reimbursement will be added to your next collection site payment.

STAFFING

The importance of supervision

Though the PaintShare program has been deliberately designed to limit the impact on site resources, a positive experience for both collection sites and customers depends on adequate supervision by depot staff.

Ensuring the PaintShare display is supervised at all times reduces liability, health, safety and environmental risks.

Depot staff do not need to stand beside customers while they browse, but are asked to:

- Monitor the PaintShare area from their regular work position
- Assist customers with PaintShare process and sticker application
- Be familiar with the program guidelines to be able to answer customer questions
- Be in a position to respond to any rule violations or safety instances

SETUP CHECKLIST

- Storage solution** in place (shelf, cart, or table)
- Appropriate location** selected (visible, accessible, supervised)
- Staff training** completed on rules and procedures
- Supplies received** from Product Care (forms, stickers, signage)
- Documentation system** established for monthly reporting
- Safety protocols** reviewed and understood by staff

below Examples of PaintShare displays; displays can adapt to meet your facility's needs and layout.



3.0 PAINT SELECTION CRITERIA

Proper paint selection is the foundation of a successful PaintShare program. By following established selection criteria, you protect your site from liability risks while building a reputation as a reliable source for quality reused paint, ultimately supporting the long-term success and profitability of your PaintShare program.

Collection site staff, along with customers, are advised to NEVER open containers to verify containers, color, or quality of paint. Opening containers creates risks, such as:

- **Spill hazards** leading to safety concerns
- **Liability issues** if customers or staff are exposed to paint
- **Environmental contamination** from accidental spills
- **Operational disruption** from cleanup process

Fortunately, there are other methods to verify the suitability of returned paint into the PaintShare program. Staff can select quality paint by following the selection criteria for paint **type** and container **size, condition, and fill**.

TRY THE SHAKE-TEST METHOD!

Use the Shake-Test to assess paint suitability without the need to open paint containers.

1. **Gently shake** the container from side to side
2. **Listen and feel** for liquid movement inside
3. **Estimate volume** based on the sound and weight distribution
4. **Reject containers** that feel solid, make no liquid sound, or seem less than half full

SELECTION BEST PRACTICES

Customers cannot open containers, so they rely on depot staff for their selection judgment. It's better to be conservative in your selection than to provide poor-quality paint. Here are tips that will provide the best customer experience:

- **Recently manufactured**, identifiable by date codes on the container label. Most use the Julian date format, that is day of year and last digit of the year (e.g. EM3479 is the 347th day of 2019) and some use yymmdd (i.e. 191213). Products made within the past five years are typically appropriate for continued use.
- **Well-known brands** that customers recognize and trust.
- **Popular colours** like whites, neutrals, and common decorator colours. Many returned paint cans have markings, labels, or color indicators on the exterior that show the paint color. These external indicators can also help customers in their decision-making.

	YES! Accept in PaintShare	NO! Do not accept
TYPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential paint: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Latex paint (water-based) - Alkyd paint (oil-based) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-paint products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solvents, paint thinners, or additives - Pesticides, cleaners, other flammables • Aerosol paints and spray cans • Industrial coatings or specialized products not intended for residential use
SIZE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Containers between 1 litre and 25 litres • All container types including cans, pails, and bags 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Containers under 1 litre • Containers over 25 litres
CONDITION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited or no rust or corrosion on the container exterior • No dents, cracks, or damage that could compromise container integrity • Secure, undamaged lid that seals properly • Clean, readable, original label 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any paint not in its original container • Significantly rusted, dented, or damaged containers • Containers that do not seal properly
FILL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Container feels 50% full • Contents feel like liquid when gently shaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Containers less than 50% full • Dried or solidified paint • Paint with strong chemical odors indicating deterioration • Frozen or heat-damaged paint

4.0 RELEASE PROCEDURE

STEP 1: PAINT SELECTION

Direct the customer to the PaintShare display area where program rules are posted. Ensure they understand that paint is offered on an "AS IS" basis with no quality guarantee. Explain that containers cannot be opened on-site but may be returned if the paint doesn't meet their needs.

STEP 2: DOCUMENTATION

Once the customer has selected their paint containers, complete the PaintShare form, filling in:

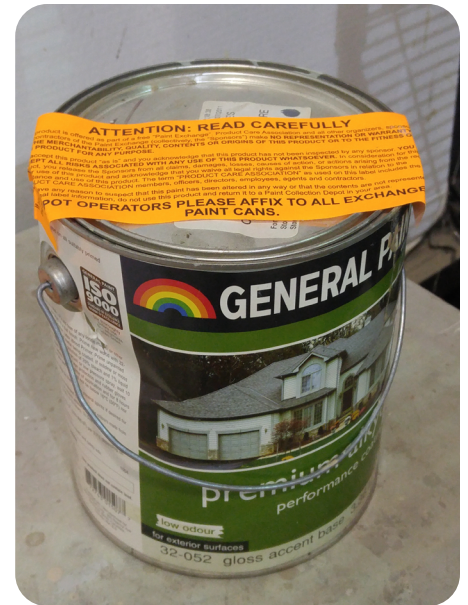
- Collection site name and full address
- Customer information: date, name, signature, and phone number
- Paint type identification
- Container count by type and size

Record the actual container size, not estimated contents. If multiple containers are taken, count each one separately by size category.

Note: Specific recording processes may differ and can be agreed with Product Care prior to beginning the program.

STEP 3: APPLY STICKER

Attach one PaintShare sticker to each container the customer is taking. Place stickers on the lid to avoid covering manufacturer instructions and warnings. This step must be completed before containers leave your site.



DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

PaintShare form

The PaintShare form is used to track volumes of paint diverted from disposal and processing as part of the program. It is also used to calculate depot compensation and contains the liability waiver. For these reasons, it is important the forms are filled in accurately and completely at the time paint is released to customers.

Please:

- Use a blue or black ballpoint pen, as other colours do not reproduce clearly when forms are emailed or faxed
- Complete one line per customer
- Start new forms when all lines are used, even for the same customer
- Total the number of containers at the bottom of each completed form
- Store completed forms safely until monthly submission

Monthly submission process

Submit all completed forms by the 10th of the following month to the email or fax number shown on the form. Organize forms by month for easier processing and include them with your regular monthly depot reporting.

CUSTOMER SERVICE GUIDELINES

Managing customer expectations

Remind customers that paint availability depends entirely on what is brought to your depot. If no suitable paint is available, encourage them to return another day as inventory changes regularly based on incoming donations.

Customers must adhere to safety and liability processes set out for the program. Please ensure the waiver form is completed and sticker is attached to the container before it is taken by any customers.

Customers who have larger community projects can also be encouraged to contact Product Care directly. [See Contact & Support for details.](#)

Return policy

Customers may return paint containers if the contents don't meet their expectations. Returned containers that are still more than half full and in liquid condition can be placed back in the PaintShare area. All other containers should be processed through the regular paint recycling process.

Privacy assurance

If customers ask about the information collection, explain that contact details are used only for transaction confirmation or to address any concerns related to their paint selection.

5.0 FAQs

ENGAGING WITH CUSTOMERS

A customer is trying to open paint cans to check the colour—what do I do?

Stop them immediately and explain that containers cannot be opened on-site for safety reasons. Remind them that paint is available “as-is” and they can return it if it doesn’t meet their needs. Most paint cans have exterior markings showing the color.

I saw someone going through the tubskids instead of the PaintShare display—what should I do?

Direct them back to the designated PaintShare area immediately. Explain that only paint in the display area is available for the program. Ensure your PaintShare area is clearly separate from storage areas.

Someone is asking me to remove the lid to show them what’s inside—should I?

Never remove lids or open containers. Explain that this creates safety hazards and liability issues. Suggest they use the shake-test method or look for exterior color indicators on the can.

A customer wants to take 20 cans of paint—should I let them?

Use your discretion. The program is designed for small home projects, not commercial use. If you suspect resale or business use, politely limit the quantity to a reasonable amount for personal projects. Customers who have larger community projects can also be encouraged to email Product Care directly. [See Contact & Support for details.](#)

Someone is taking paint every week—is this normal?

Some customers become regular users, which is fine for legitimate personal projects. However, if you suspect commercial resale, you can limit frequency or quantities at your discretion.

A customer is angry that they can’t take other items from the depot—how do I handle this?

Explain clearly that PaintShare is a unique, community-focused program that only covers paint containers, not other recyclable items. Collection sites and depots work to collect unwanted items from consumers and ensure they are safely managed at the end of their useful life—they are not meant to be re-use centres.

A customer brought back paint saying it was dried out—what do I do?

Accept the return professionally. If the paint is still liquid and more than half full, it can go back in the display. If it’s dried out, process it through regular recycling. Use this as feedback to improve your paint selection.

A customer wants to return empty paint containers—do I take them?

Yes! Empty returns are great - process them through regular paint recycling. You essentially get paid twice for the same container (once for PaintShare distribution, and then again for recycling).

OPERATIONS

Someone spilled paint while browsing—who's responsible for cleanup?

Address spills immediately using your standard cleanup procedures. While accidents happen, reinforce the no-opening policy to prevent future incidents. Refer to the "Dealing with a spill" section of the Collection Site Guidelines, and contact Product Care if you need guidance.

I'm too busy to supervise the PaintShare area right now—what are my options?

If you can't provide adequate supervision, temporarily close the display or remove it from the customer area. Supervision is critical for safety and liability protection. If you wish to close the PaintShare display for longer stretches, like weeks or months, please advise Product Care so the PaintShare identifier is removed from your placement on Product Care's online Recycling Locator tool.

No one has taken paint in weeks—should I be worried?

Paint demand varies seasonally and by location. Keep suitable paint available and be patient. Consider if your display is visible and accessible. Contact Product Care if low demand continues for several months.

My PaintShare area is getting cluttered—how do I manage inventory?

Regularly review and rotate stock. Remove containers that have been sitting too long or show signs of deterioration. Keep the display organized and appealing to customers.

My outdoor display got rained on—is the paint still usable?

Check containers for water damage or rust. If containers are compromised, remove them from the display.

ADMINISTRATION

I'm running low on PaintShare stickers and forms—what should I do?

Contact Product Care immediately using the details at the end of this guide. Don't wait until you're completely out—order replacements as soon as supplies get low. Conversely, if you have one blank form still available, you can photocopy it and utilize copies.

I forgot to submit last month's forms—what should I do?

Submit them as soon as possible. Contact Product Care to explain the situation or add a note to your form if it was delayed by over two months. Late submissions may delay your compensation payment.

CONTACT & SUPPORT

Have questions about PaintShare? We're here to help!

In Ontario

PHONE

1-877-592-2972 ext. 357

EMAIL

ONcommunity@productcare.org

ADDRESS

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SERVICE PARTNER PORTAL

For monthly claim submissions: servicepartners.ca.

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