UO Hazardous Waste Disposal

Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) collects and manages hazardous wastes generated at the University of Oregon for subsequent disposal, treatment or recycling. This quick reference describes those wastes. Call EHS at 6-3192, and review EHS web media, for specific questions about disposal procedures.

**General Information:**
- Tag and identify contents of every container using EHS Tags
- Store Safely – closed containers, secondary containment if waste includes free liquids, maximum container size of one gallon (unless by special arrangement), and containers filled to maximum of 90% capacity
- Arrange for disposal through EHS on a regular basis
  - Online Chemical Safety Assistant users...
    - [http://ehs.uoregon.edu/chemical-safety-assistant](http://ehs.uoregon.edu/chemical-safety-assistant)
  - Or, call 6-3192
  - Or, Waste will be collected within 5 days

**Disallowed Practices:**
- **Hazardous waste storage in hallways or other public locations**
- Disposal of hazardous waste to sinks, lavatories, or floor drains
- Disposal of hazardous waste to garbage containers
- Treatment of wastes by evaporation or other methods
- Mixing of incompatible chemical wastes
- Mixing of biological, chemical, and radioactive wastes

**Regulated Chemical Waste** -- [http://ehs.uoregon.edu/hazardous-waste](http://ehs.uoregon.edu/hazardous-waste)
- Chemicals that are Flammable, Toxic, Corrosive or Reactive
- Chemically-contaminated gels, tips, sorbents, and equipment
- Formalin/Aldehyde liquids from preserved tissues or body parts
- Non-returnable gas cylinders and lecture bottles
- Controlled Substances and medications
- Degreasers and cleaning products
- Pesticides
- Mercury-containing thermometers, switches, etc.

**Universal Waste**
- Waste or used oil
- Fluorescent, mercury vapor, or metal halide lamps
- Batteries (all types)
- Refrigerants (in coils, and in containers)
- Aerosol cans

*NOTE: Computer and Electronic Equipment (University owned) is collected by the Office of Business Affairs, Property Control*
Medical Pathological/Biohazard Waste --

http://ehs.uoregon.edu/biosafety-forms-guidelines

- Non-infectious carcasses, anatomical waste, and bedding
- Fixed tissues (with no free fixative)
- Materials contaminated with USDA Select Agents and Toxins
- Materials contaminated with cytotoxic drugs
- Human body fluids or contaminated debris (soaked, or free liquids)
- Non-human primate tissues or bodily fluids
- Solid lab waste contaminated with biohazardous materials
- Liquid biohazardous cultures or specimens
- Animals and their tissues, if transgenic or exposed to biohazardous materials
- Genetically modified organisms or genetically modified plants

Sharps –

The State of Oregon defines “sharps” to include the following:

- Needles
- IV tubing with needles attached
- Scalpel blades (including razor blades)
- Lancets
- Glass tubes that could be broken during handling (e.g., capillary tubes, thin-walled test tubes, Pasteur pipettes)
- Syringes that have been removed from their original sterile containers

Additionally, a “syringe” is an instrument that consists of a hollow barrel fitted with a plunger and a hollow needle.

UO requires that all sharps be collected in one of the following containers:

1. *In areas used for patient care, Animal and Biosafety Level 2 laboratories, or otherwise used with human or non-human primate source materials*, a standard sharps container containing a biohazard symbol, as depicted here.

2. *In all other areas, such as Animal and Biosafety Level 1 laboratories, chemistry laboratories, arts/theater, and facility maintenance use*, the sharps containers depicted above are optional. Alternatively, groups may collect sharps in an EHS-approved leakproof, rigid, puncture-resistant container that can be securely closed once filled. The container must clearly be marked “SHARPS” and conflicting information removed or marked through. Examples include plastic laundry...
detergent bottles, coffee cans, or containers intended for non-hazardous sharps.

When containers are ¾ filled, close the lid securely and request pickup from EHS. ALL sharps must be picked up by EHS for incineration, with the only exceptions being groups contracting directly with a waste disposal vendor for incineration. Do not place sharps in the dumpster.

Syringes without attached needles may be disposed of in the biohazard (red bag) waste stream. However, removing needles from syringes for the express purpose of preferred waste disposal is prohibited.

Radioactive Waste -- [http://ehs.uoregon.edu/radioactive-waste-pickup](http://ehs.uoregon.edu/radioactive-waste-pickup)

- Any waste containing, or contaminated with, radioactive material
  - Aqueous radioactive solutions
  - Liquid scintillation vials, fluids, and materials
  - Materials contaminated by radioactive materials after inactivation of infectious agents
  - Ionizing smoke detectors

Mixed Waste – avoid creating whenever possible

- Waste containing two or more characteristics of biohazardous, hazardous chemical, or radioactive nature.
  - Flammable, corrosive, or toxic radioactive liquids
  - Infectious chemical or radioactive wastes
  - Lead contaminated with radioactive material
  - Phenol/chloroform used to extract radiolabeled DNA

Municipal Waste Requiring Treatment or Special Handling

- Solvent-based paint is collected by EHS
- Latex-based paint should be re-used, or recycled by return to manufacturer/seller.

Glass –

Laboratory glassware (e.g., beakers, Erlenmeyer flasks) and broken glass that is not contaminated with hazardous materials must be disposed of in standard “Broken Glass” boxes. These boxes may be obtained from Science Stores or scientific supply companies. The boxes should be securely taped at the bottom to prevent heavy contents from breaking through, and the plastic bag liner must be in place. Use of homemade cardboard boxes or other containers is only permitted with express approval from EHS.

Glass contaminated with infectious or recombinant materials may be decontaminated with appropriate disinfectant and then disposed in the “broken glass” box IF the glass can be safely handled. Alternatively, it may be disposed of in the sharps container.
If glassware is contaminated with chemical or radiological material, please consult with EHS for disposal options.

When the box is filled, please tape it shut securely. Lab staff may take boxes to the dumpsters or request pickup from EHS. Unbroken, empty reagent containers are not considered laboratory glassware, and may be disposed directly to garbage dumpsters.

Commonly Asked Hazardous Waste Questions

**How do I collect the waste?**
- Segregate waste streams - organic from inorganic, solids from liquids, halogenated from non-halogenated. The more you segregate waste, the more recycling and disposal options remain available to the UO.
- Glass or plastic bottles are acceptable. Consider the compatibility of the waste with the bottle, and find an appropriately sized bottle for the amount of waste you expect to generate.
- Containers must be labeled from the first time a waste is placed in the container.
- **Containers must be kept closed except when adding material.**

**How do I store it?**
- Store the waste material in a controlled area and in secondary containment. Make sure containers are sealed, non-leaking and properly identified with the proper waste tag.
- Do not over fill containers (for liquids, leave two or more inches of headspace).

**How do I identify the waste?**
- List the contents by common name, no abbreviations or formula.
- If several small additions are made over time, create a log sheet of discarded materials, noting the material, concentration and amount. Initial and date each entry. Use this to fill out the waste tag when the container is full.

**Where are written guidelines and resources?**
- Hazardous Waste Program -- [ehs.uoregon.edu/hazardous-waste](http://ehs.uoregon.edu/hazardous-waste)
  - Chemical Compatibility Guide
  - Quick Reference Guide
  - Hazardous Waste Guide
- Biosafety Program -- [http://ehs.uoregon.edu/biosafety](http://ehs.uoregon.edu/biosafety)
  - Biological Safety Manual
  - Biohazardous Waste Disposal Guidelines
- Radiation Safety Program -- [http://ehs.uoregon.edu/radiation-safety](http://ehs.uoregon.edu/radiation-safety)
  - Radiation Safety Manual
  - Radioactive Waste Pick-up
Who are my resources for biological, chemical, and radioactive waste questions?

- Biological waste – Biosafety Officer
- Chemical waste – Hazardous Waste Specialist, Laboratory Safety Officer
- Radioactive waste, or Mixed waste – Radiation Safety Officer

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