

**Rutgers Environmental Health and Safety (REHS)  
Guidance Document****Title:** Management of Universal Wastes from Laboratories**Revision Date:** October 7, 2020**BACKGROUND**

Some of the waste generated in Rutgers research laboratories is regulated as **Universal Waste** and cannot be discarded into the general trash. Instead, it must be managed appropriately to protect the environment and human health. The items identified below are designated as Universal Waste and must be managed as specified.

**Batteries**

Rechargeable batteries must be collected in laboratories and labeled with the Rutgers Universal Waste Label (see Fig. 1). This includes the following:

- Lead Acid
- Nickel Cadmium (NiCad)
- Nickel Metal Hydride (NiMH)
- Lithium (Ion and Metal)

The batteries listed above must be collected by REHS for proper disposal and/or recycling. Complete a request for pickup at the following online link:

<https://halflife.rutgers.edu/forms/hazwaste.php>

NOTE: Alkaline batteries are not rechargeable and can be disposed of in the general trash.

**Consumer Electronics**

Consumer electronics such as computers, printers, monitors, televisions, VCRs, radios and other electronic equipment that contain circuit boards are regulated as Universal Waste. Other laboratory analytical equipment that is destined for disposal must be evaluated for electronic hardware prior to disposal.

Contact Material Services at (848) 445-2255 for removal of these items. Alternatively, submit a surplus materials form at <https://ipo.rutgers.edu/bs/surplus-pickups>.

## Mercury-Containing Equipment

Mercury-containing switches, thermostats and intact thermometers are managed as Universal Waste. Place these items in a zip-lock bag labeled with the Rutgers Universal Waste Label. Broken Mercury thermometers must be managed as Hazardous Waste and labeled accordingly. Mercury-containing items must be picked up by REHS. Complete a request for pickup at the following online link:

<https://halflife.rutgers.edu/forms/hazwaste.php>

Other Mercury-containing equipment such as barometers, freeze dryers or specialized lab equipment must have the mercury drained prior to disposal. Contact REHS at (848) 445-2550 to arrange for proper disposal.

## Fluorescent Light Bulbs and Other Electric Lamps

Spent fluorescent light bulbs are managed by the Facilities Maintenance Department. These items are stored in various central locations throughout Rutgers. The following electric lamps are also regulated as Universal Waste:

- High Intensity Discharge
- Neon
- Mercury Vapor
- High-Pressure Sodium
- Metal Halide

Contact your Facilities Maintenance Zone Manager to request a pickup of spent fluorescent bulbs or other regulated electric lamps.

**Fig. 1. Rutgers Universal Waste Label**



The image shows a 'Universal Waste' label from Rutgers University. At the top, it says 'Universal Waste' in large white letters on a black background. Below that, the Rutgers logo is displayed, followed by 'Rutgers Environmental Health and Safety' and the address: '74 Street 1603, Building 4116, Piscataway, NJ 08854, Phone # 848-445-2550'. On the left side, there is a box titled 'Waste Types' with four checkboxes: 'Batteries', 'Lamp/bulbs', 'Mercury containing equipment', and 'Consumer electronics'. Below this box, there are fields for 'Campus', 'Bldg', and 'Rm #', and a line for 'Accumulation Start Date:'. In the bottom right corner, there is a small box with the text: 'These labels should be applied on all containers that store spent batteries, fluorescent lamps/bulbs, mercury containing equipment, consumer electronics.'

Call REHS at (848) 445-2550  
[hazwaste@rutgers.edu](mailto:hazwaste@rutgers.edu)