

Rutgers Environmental Health and Safety (REHS) Guidance Document

Title: Management of Waste from Art Studios & Theater Departments

Revision Date: October 16, 2020

BACKGROUND

Some of the waste generated in Art and Theater Departments cannot be discarded into the general trash but instead must be managed appropriately to protect the environment. The most common waste materials include the following:

- Paints and Solvents (e.g. mineral spirits)
- Contaminated Rags and Towels
- Darkroom Chemicals & Silver Recovery
- Consumer Electronics
- Fluorescent Light Bulbs and Other Electric Lamps
- Cylinders
- Toner Cartridges

Paints and Solvents

Paints and solvents may be hazardous or non-hazardous depending on their chemical composition. To dispose of latex paints, open the paint can and allow any residual paint in the can to harden completely before disposing in the general trash. For oil based paints, request a pickup from REHS through the online Request for Hazardous Waste Disposal at

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

Aerosol paint or solvent cans that are completely or partially full must be disposed of as hazardous waste. Request a pickup from REHS through the online Request for Hazardous Waste Disposal at

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

Many solvents used in art and theater departments are flammable and/or toxic and therefore need to be disposed of as hazardous waste. However, REHS supports a mineral spirits recycling program in many art departments by decanting the spent mineral spirits layer from the settled paint residue and offering it back to the department for reuse.

Some water based or environmentally friendly solvents may be non-hazardous. Contact REHS for advice if you are uncertain.

Contaminated Rags and Towels

Rags and towels (cloth and paper) contaminated with paints or solvents may be classified as hazardous waste or non-hazardous waste based on the types of paints or solvents used. Please refer to the Disposal of Contaminated Rags and Towels (Cloth and Paper) at the link below for further information.

<https://ipo.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/Cont-Rags-Guide-3-16-09%20%281%29.pdf>

Darkroom Chemicals and Silver Recovery

The photographic developing process involves many types of chemicals that may be deemed hazardous waste upon disposal. For example, unused stop bath chemicals are acidic in nature and spent fixer contains silver which is regulated under EPA's Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). Due to the value of silver, many photographic operations employ silver recovery units which need to be carefully maintained. For further information on darkroom chemicals and silver recovery, refer to the Darkroom Waste Management Program at

<https://ipo.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/drkrm%20%281%29.pdf>

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. Any other 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>.

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.

Cylinders

Most cylinders can be returned to the supplier or manufacturer for reuse. Contact the supplier for instructions on returning cylinders and scheduling a pickup. If the manufacturer or contents of the cylinder cannot be identified, contact REHS for advice.

Toner Cartridges

The majority of spent or expired toner cartridges can be returned to the supplier or manufacturer in the original container. Be sure to save the original box and instructions for return to the manufacturer. If you do not have the original container, check the manufacturer's website for instructions. Most manufacturers provide postage-free delivery. Rutgers encourages this type of recycling of spent toner cartridges.

Call REHS at (848) 445-2550
hazwaste@rutgers.edu