

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY POLICY FOR DISPOSAL OF EMPTY / USED LABORATORY CONTAINERS & GLASSWARE

Section I - General Information

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure used containers and discarded laboratory glassware are properly and safely managed to prevent injury and environmental contamination from improper disposal.

- This policy applies to all containers and laboratory glassware, intact as well as broken, including chemically contaminated containers and glassware.
- This policy does not cover radioisotope-contaminated containers/glassware, Regulated Medical Waste (RMW) contaminated containers/glassware, and raw material drums. These are to be managed in accordance with the Radioactive Waste Policy, RMW Disposal Policy, etc.
- This policy does not include glass, aluminum, or plastic food and beverage containers; the majority of this material is recycled.

B. Definitions/General Information

Acute Hazardous Waste, or “P” listed waste, are chemicals that the EPA deemed acutely toxic to human health and the environment. They are listed in 40 CFR 261.33(e), and on the REHS website. Acutely hazardous waste may be a commercial chemical product, off-spec commercial product, the spill residues, or the substance is the sole active ingredient of a formulation of any chemical bearing the generic name on this list.

Used Containers – Any empty containers that previously contained a chemical or petroleum product. Containers include plastic and glass bottles, metal and plastic pails, plastic bags, and bladders. These containers are considered contaminated until they are purposely decontaminated in accordance with this policy.

Empty containers must be discarded or can only be used to collect hazardous waste (see the [Hazardous Waste Disposal Policy / Procedure in the Chemical Hygiene Guide](#)), and under no circumstances be given to students, staff or the community for any other use.

Section II – Generator / Laboratory Personnel Responsibilities

Generator / Lab personnel Responsibilities

- Remove/empty all materials from the container by using the methods commonly employed to empty the container (pumping, pouring, etc.). Containers that are not empty of all contents will not be removed from the area.
- Empty containers, that contained aqueous based liquids or solid materials (i.e. acids or bases), are to be rinsed out. If the container previously held a hazardous chemical, the rinsate must be collected as hazardous waste. If the container previously held a material listed in the University Drain Disposal Procedure, of the Hazardous Waste Disposal Policy / Procedure, the rinsate can be drain disposed.
- Empty containers, that contained volatile liquids (i.e. solvents), are to be placed into an operating empty fume hood overnight (without the cap) to allow the vapors to disperse. *Note: It is improper to dispose of volatile liquids by evaporating.*
- Empty containers that contained an acutely hazardous waste (“P” waste – see definition) should be disposed of as a hazardous waste in their entirety (container, cap and residuals) in accordance with [the Hazardous Waste Disposal Policy / Procedure](#). These containers are not to be decontaminated or discarded by laboratory personnel.
- When containers are contaminated with residues that would be classified as a hazardous waste and the residues cannot be removed, the entire container with residues must be disposed of as a hazardous waste. See the [Hazardous Waste Disposal Policy / Procedure](#).
- Empty compressed gas cylinders should be returned to the vendor. If the vendor will not accept the cylinder, it must be disposed of through REHS. See the [Hazardous Waste Disposal Policy / Procedure](#).
- Deface labels by placing an “X” across the label or by removing it.
- Secure lids on all containers before placing them into the appropriate disposal receptacle.
- Place all glass, intact as well as broken, into a specially marked rigid container designed for this purpose (refer to "Specifications" section, below). The container must be lined with a leak-resistant liner (e.g. a polyethylene or polypropylene bag). Plastic and metal containers can be discarded directly into the general trash.
- If the container contains broken glass, clearly mark it as "BROKEN GLASS" to describe its contents.

- Always discard glass, plastic, and metal containers originating in the laboratory according to the above procedure and not into a recycling container.
- Make special arrangements for bulky or heavy boxes with Custodial Services by calling the Facilities Maintenance Service Desk on your campus.

Custodial Services Responsibilities / Container Removal

- Decontaminated and empty discarded glass, when packed in its special container, may be disposed of with the regular trash by Custodial Services.
- Custodial Services will not collect containers that are not properly emptied or decontaminated. The containers will be left in the location until properly emptied or decontaminated.
- If the container is too heavy or bulky that special handling is required, Custodial Services personnel should contact their supervisor for proper handling requirements.

Specifications -- Glass disposal containers

1. Table Model 8" x 8" x 10", with cover. Fisher Catalogue No. 12-009-7B
2. Floor Model 12" x 12" x 27", with cover. Fisher Catalogue No. 12-009-7A

These items are available for purchase through Fisher Scientific.

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