

Waste Management & Disposal – Biological



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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY

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Biological /Medical waste is carefully monitored and regulated by state and federal laws because it contains virulent pathogens that may cause infectious disease if exposed to it. The following types of biological/ medical waste may be encountered in a laboratory setting: solids, sharps, liquid, outdated or chemotherapeutic/ pharmaceutical, pathological, and glass.

Solids

Examples: Biological solid waste material must be disposed of into red biohazard bags within rigid, leak-resistant containers with lids. All containers and bags must be labeled "Biohazardous Waste" and the universal biohazard symbol. The biological /medical waste barrel must be kept covered at all times and not overfilled. Red Biohazard Bags must be replaced weekly when anything is placed inside.

Sharps

Examples: Needles, razor blades, scalpels, contaminated microscope slides, glass pipettes and pipette tips, glass Pasteur pipettes, glass Vacutainer tubes, and dental wires. Sharps must be disposed of into a rigid puncture resistant sharps container that is leak resistant, tightly covered, and labeled with the universal biohazard symbol. Items are not allowed to rest on or protrude from the baffle. Sharps containers must be disposed of within a week after the lid is closed.

Liquid

This includes blood and body fluids, and fluids containing fibrin, which may be disposed of through the conventional sanitary sewage system after they have been deactivated with 10% solution bleach and copious amounts of water. Only non-clotted blood or body fluids may be disposed of in this manner.

Chemotherapeutic/ Pharmaceutical

This includes all outdated pharmaceuticals, empty vials, and broken ampoules which must be disposed of in a securely sealed pharmaceutical waste container. All chemotherapeutic waste (including PPE) must be disposed of in a yellow waste container and sealed securely. Place this box on top of the biohazardous barrel until pick-up for disposal or call the Biological Safety Specialist for instructions.

Pathological

Examples: Organs, tissues, body parts, and fluids which have been removed by trauma, surgery, autopsy, or other medical procedure. Human or animal tissues injected with a human pathogen are potentially infectious. Pathological waste must only be placed in a white container, and must be immediately disposed of when generated. Animal carcasses injected with a retroviral vector or carcinogen must be placed in a labeled biohazardous ziploc bag and frozen until pick-up.

Glass

Examples: Broken glassware that is visibly contaminated with biological materials which must be disposed of in the appropriate sharps container. Broken or intact laboratory glassware must be decontaminated before disposal. Non-contaminated glassware may be disposed of in a heavy, puncture resistant cardboard or metal container lined with plastic. Seal the container and label with "CLEAN GLASS: REGULAR WASTE DISPOSAL." These may be disposed of as regular trash.

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