

Managing Your Hazardous Waste

Containers of hazardous waste may be stored in an area of a laboratory or facilities operation near the point of generation. This area must be controlled by the principal investigator or workers generating the waste. State and federal regulations stipulate how waste generators store chemical waste and require the following:

- Select a container that is compatible with the chemical waste and has a secure closure. Use containers that are made of or lined with materials that will not react with the hazardous waste to be stored. For example, do not place hydrofluoric acid in glass; use plastic instead. Often the original container is suitable.
- Remove or deface all existing labels on the container.
- Make a hazardous waste determination.
- Label the container with the words “Hazardous Waste” or “Chemical Waste” as appropriate.
- Keep a record of the container contents, either attached to the container or on a separate sheet. If on a separate sheet, it must be near the container and available for inspection at all times.
- Add only compatible waste to the container.
- Use separate containers for hazardous and non-hazardous waste.
- Waste containers must be closed at all times, except when being filled. Do not leave funnels in the containers.
- Do not date the container, unless it is a Universal Waste.
- Be sure that containers in the waste storage area do not leak. Consider the use of secondary containment, such as a tray, larger container or basin. If a leaking container is found, immediately clean up any spilled material according to established spill cleanup procedures and transfer the waste into a container that is in good condition.
- Full containers must have at least a 10% headspace to allow for expansion. **DO NOT OVERFILL.**
- No more than one quart of an acutely hazardous waste (P-listed waste) or 55 gallons of other hazardous wastes may be stored in the waste storage area. If this threshold quantity is approached, submit a waste collection request to EHS.
- Store waste containers in an area that is near the point of waste generation and is under your control.
- Like any chemical storage in the laboratory or work area, be sure to segregate the containers according to the type of waste.
- Waste stored near drains (floor, sink, cup sink) must have secondary containment. If you have a sink or drain that is not in use, contact Facilities Services to explore possibilities for plugging or sealing the drain. Secondary containers must be compatible with the waste. Contact EHS for more information.