

Department of Chemistry, University of Idaho

Guidelines for Laboratory Trash

Following are some guidelines for dealing with trash. Please follow these to prevent accidental exposures and injuries to our custodial staff or financial penalties from Latah Sanitation, our garbage collection company.

Empty chemical bottles

Wash bottles thoroughly, repeat, and repeat again. Drain and let dry completely, then place outside your door for disposal. The custodian will either dispose of the bottles or take them to ChemStores for reuse.

Sharps (e.g., broken glass, needles, razor blades, scalpels, pipettes, nails)

Never put sharps in your trash can. Discard all sharps into a puncture-resistant container that is clearly labeled "sharps." If necessary, clean the sharps before disposal. When the container is full, seal it with tape and ask the custodian to dispose of it.

Saturated paper waste

If you use paper towels to clean a chemical spill, put them in an appropriate container or bag and dispose of them with your regular chemical waste using a Hazardous Material Disposal Form. Do not put paper towels used for chemical cleanups in your trash can.

Biohazards

Use red biohazard bags (located in the first aid boxes in the corridors) if you need to dispose of things saturated with blood or other bodily fluids. Wear gloves to protect yourself and others when handling biohazards. Call me or Environmental Health & Safety to arrange for disposal of the bags.

Dumpster

Dumpsters on university property are for trash generated on campus only. Normally, the custodians are responsible for placing trash into the dumpster. However, if you are cleaning out a room you may deposit items yourself, but do not overfill the dumpster or place items such as pallets, crates, computer equipment, or large scrap metal into it. If you are unsure about what you can place in the dumpster, ask me or the custodian.