safety focus

Hazardous Waste

The many different clinical and research operations at OHSU produce hazardous waste, and we must responsibly track and handle our wastes in very precise ways. OHSU is expected to set the example due to the nature of our work, and employees must understand the basics of hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal.

Treatment

- Most acids and bases can be neutralized in the lab. This saves disposal money! All others must be collected by Environmental Health and Radiation (EHRS) for safe disposal.
- Never evaporate chemicals in fume hoods. This violates hazardous waste rules.

Storage

- Wastes must be removed from OHSU within 90 days of EHRS receipt. There is no storage limitation before EHRS receives the waste.
- Chemicals are segregated by oxidizers, corrosives, poisons, and flammables.
- Waste containers must always be capped and stored in appropriate containers.
- Containers must always labeled as "Hazardous Waste," and labels must list the contents.
- Up to 10 gallons of flammable liquids may be stored outside of flammable storage cabinets.

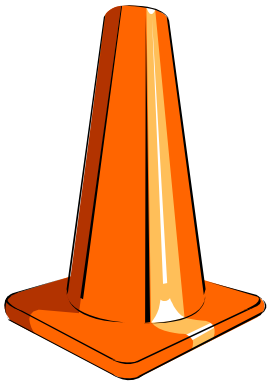
Disposal - Call EHRS (503 494-7795) for pick-up of waste chemicals.

- Many compatible chemicals can be mixed by EHRS to save on disposal costs.
- Sink Disposal is allowed for many chemicals, but make sure you follow instructions found in the "Chemical Waste Drain Disposal" list at ozone.ohsu.edu/ehrs
- OHSU is required to monitor and test our wastewater for permit-regulated chemicals.
- Some expired chemicals must even be disposed of by the Portland Bomb Squad. (e.g.: hydrazine, expired ethyl ether, nitrobenzene, expired picric acid.) Call EHRS for help.

Recycle

- Mercury-containing fluorescent light tubes, microscope lamps, thermometers, thermostats.
- Some chemicals don't need to be wasted (Call EHRS for the list).
- Batteries of all kinds, except batteries designated "ZMA - Zero Mercury Added."
- Lead foil and x-ray aprons.
- Silver solids, solutions, and amalgam.

Spills - Chemical spills must be dealt with quickly and properly. **All employees working with chemicals must know how to deal with spills, but if you are in doubt or the cleanup appears to be beyond your abilities, call 4-4444 immediately!** OHSU Public Safety will dispatch the appropriate experts. Don't feel shy about calling; we employ these experts for good reasons.



This information is a service of the OHSU Safety Committee (503 494-7795).
(06/06)