

# Greening Up The Lab: *Managing Hazardous Waste*

Proper disposal of hazardous materials is fundamental to minimizing the environmental impact of the lab. It's also the law.

EHS is your partner in proper disposal of chemical, biological and radioactive waste. You can learn more about waste management on the EHS website at [ehs.princeton.edu/waste](http://ehs.princeton.edu/waste).

## Types of Chemical Waste

Used chemicals are considered hazardous if they are ignitable, corrosive, unstable or contain toxic metals or organics. Improper management of such materials can lead to significant environmental harm, as well as fines and criminal penalties.

## Packaging, Storage and Disposal

Chemical waste is placed in labeled, sealable containers that must remain



closed except when being filled. Containers are stored until pickup at or near the area where the waste is generated.

Waste is collected directly from laboratories and other points of generation on Princeton University's main campus on Thursdays (excluding holidays and closings).

To request a pick-up, fill out the [Waste Removal Request Form](http://ehs.princeton.edu/waste-pick-request) ([ehs.princeton.edu/waste-pick-request](http://ehs.princeton.edu/waste-pick-request)). Requests placed before 5 p.m. on Wednesday are included in the following day's collection.

### Waste eligible for removal:

- Non-regulated experimental waste and debris
- Hazardous waste
- Spill debris or grossly contaminated materials
- Used pump oil
- Mercury containing articles

## Regulated Medical Waste

Certain materials generated by research lab activities must be disposed of as regulated medical waste, or RMW. RMW is categorized as either



solids (gloves, flasks, etc.), liquids (cultures, specimens, etc.) or sharps (needles, blades, etc.), with different disposal procedures for each.

Solids are usually autoclaved (sterilized with heat) before disposal in a labeled, regulated medical waste box. Sharps are also disposed of in specialized containers. Both sharps and solids are picked up by a waste contractor specializing in processing of these materials. Liquid waste is sterilized with bleach or autoclaving before disposal.

Labs requiring medical waste boxes or sharps disposal containers should contact their departmental supervisors.