

## Medical School Laboratory Infectious Waste Disposal Guide\*

\* For research laboratories located in School of Medicine buildings (except Smilow and South Tower). Procedures may vary in the hospital, clinical areas or other University spaces. For more information on infectious waste, consult the University's Biological Safety Manual (<https://ehrs.upenn.edu/health-safety/biosafety/biological-safety-manual>), or refer questions about the disposal of sharps to EHRS at 215-898-4453 or email the office at [ehrs@ehrs.upenn.edu](mailto:ehrs@ehrs.upenn.edu).

Container Type	Glassware/ Plasticware Waste Cardboard Box	Infectious Waste Sharps Container**	Infectious Waste Autoclave Bags	Infectious Waste Liquid Containers
<b>Contents</b>	<p>Uncontaminated laboratory glassware and plasticware. Chemical bottles must be triple rinsed and label defaced.</p> <p>Line cardboard glassware boxes with heavy, clear plastic liner.</p> <p><b>Do not use biohazard burn boxes or red/orange bags to collect glass/plasticware waste under any circumstances.</b></p>	<p><u>Infectious waste sharps including:</u> All needles and syringes; broken or unbroken glass and plasticware that has contacted infectious agents or was used in animal or human patient care or treatment, including plastic pipettes and other used plasticware that is recognizable after autoclaving or made of plastic that shatters on breakage or is considered breakable by the investigator.</p> <p><u>Chemical-contaminated sharps waste (trace amount):</u> Dispose of in Reusable Sharps Container -or- segregate into disposable sharps containers labeled "Chemical Contaminated Sharps Waste-Do Not Autoclave"</p> <p><u>Non-infectious Sharps:</u> Dispose in a sharps container through the infectious waste stream. Containers of non-infectious sharps may be discarded as infectious waste without prior autoclaving if the label is defaced.</p> <p>NOTE: Non-infectious sharps may be commingled with infectious waste sharps or chemical-contaminated sharps waste. If this is done, they must be managed as described for the respective category of sharps.</p>	<p>All contaminated laboratory items <u>NOT</u> considered sharps, including used plasticware that is deformed after autoclaving or made of polyethylene (PE), polyvinyl chloride (PVC), and other thermoplastic polymers provided they do not shatter on breakage or are considered unbreakable by the investigator.</p>	<p>Infectious waste fluids (volumes greater than 20 cc).</p>
<b>Reusable</b>	<p>NO, if using a lined glassware/ plasticware waste cardboard box.</p> <p>YES, if using a white glass waste bucket. (where available)</p>	<p><u>Reusable sharps containers</u> - YES (do not autoclave)</p> <p><u>Disposable sharps containers</u> – (NO autoclave prior to disposal unless otherwise indicated)</p>	<p>NO</p>	<p>YES</p>
<b>Disposal Methods</b>	<p>Seal cardboard box when <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> full for housekeepers to remove.</p> <p>Glass waste buckets are removed regularly by housekeepers. <b>Do not overfill!</b></p>	<p><u>Reusable sharps containers:</u> are pickup up at their location by vendor and replaced with clean containers.</p> <p><u>Disposable sharps containers:</u> autoclave containers and discard in designated collection bins located near the autoclave room.</p> <p><u>Chemical-contaminated sharps waste and Non-infectious Sharps waste (with label defaced):</u> discard both <b>without</b> autoclaving in designated collection bins located near autoclave room.</p>	<p>Autoclave red/orange bagged infectious waste and discard in designated collection bins located near the autoclave room</p>	<p>Autoclave liquid or use appropriate disinfectant before pouring into a sanitary sewer drain.</p> <p>The reusable container must be washed and autoclaved before reuse.</p>
<b>Container Source</b>	<p>User must purchase cardboard boxes.</p> <p>Space Planning and Operations (8-8000) supplies buckets.</p>	<p><u>Disposable sharps containers:</u> – user must purchase</p> <p><u>Reusable containers for sharps:</u> – delivered by vendor: Curtis Bay Medical Waste Services (Mr. Jordan Jaskolka @ 610-741-7517 <a href="mailto:upenn@curtisbaymws.com">upenn@curtisbaymws.com</a>)</p>	<p>User must purchase.</p>	<p>User must purchase.</p>

\*\* NOTE: All sharps must be disposed of in sharps containers at the time of generations and kept there until final destruction. For more details on how to properly sort and manage disposal of all laboratory sharps waste, consult the EHRS LABORATORY SHARPS WASTE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (<https://ehrs.upenn.edu/health-safety/regulated-waste/sharps-glassware/laboratory-sharps-waste>).