Biohazardous Waste Disposal

All biohazardous waste being generated by Georgia State University laboratories must be properly disposed of according to federal and state regulations. Biohazardous waste may be incinerated, autoclaved or treated with chemical disinfectants.

The Regulated Medical Waste (RMW) boxes, also known as incineration or biohazardous boxes are used to dispose of regulated medical waste via incineration method. Incineration is costly and contributes to detrimental air quality affecting human health.

In order to have a cost-effect and environmental friendly disposal program, the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) recommends that only certain type of biohazardous waste be incinerated. All other waste may be autoclaved or treated with chemical disinfectants.

**Incineration:**

The following items must be treated as RMW and sent for incineration:

- Pathological waste - all recognizable human tissues and body parts.
- Contaminated animal carcasses, body parts, their bedding, and other wastes from such animals.
- Sharps containers – used for contaminated sharps, needles, syringes, blades, etc.
- Biological materials contaminated with Ethidium Bromide (EtBr).

**Autoclave or Chemical Treatment:**

Unless otherwise specified by the IBC or the Research and Environmental Safety, all other biological waste (non-sharp) may be autoclaved or disinfected with an appropriate chemical disinfectant.

**Non-sharp biological waste includes but is not limited to:**

- Items that are contaminated with human or animal specimen material such as gloves or disposable PPE.
- Cultures, stocks of infectious agents, and associated microorganisms and biologicals, including dishes and devices used to transfer, inoculate and mix cultures.
- Plastic-ware such as pipettes or pipette tips, culture plates, specimen vials, etc. that are contaminated with biological specimens, bacterial and cell culture material, or nucleic acids.
- Contaminated towels and bench paper.
Liquid biohazardous waste may be treated and disposed of by 2 methods:

1) Chemical treatment with an appropriate disinfectant (e.g. bleach) and contact time, once contact time has been reached, the mixture may be discharged into the sanitary sewer via the lab sink. Note that not all disinfectants can be discarded down the drain, contact RES to ensure if the sink disposal of disinfectants other than bleach is acceptable.

2) Autoclave liquid waste and discharge via the laboratory sink. Do NOT autoclave liquid waste containing chemical disinfectants.

**Autoclave Training:**

Laboratory personnel must undergo training prior to using an equipment, including autoclaves. Autoclave training is provided by the Core Facility. To register for an autoclave training course, please contact Debby Walthall (dwalthall@gsu.edu).

**Additional Information:**

For more information regarding biohazardous waste disposal or any other biosafety related questions, please contact Research and Environmental Safety at biosafety@gsu.edu.