

Disposal of Laboratory Glassware

Glassware must not be disposed of in regular laboratory trash. Housekeeping and other personnel have sustained puncture wounds or lacerations when carrying bags containing broken glass or other sharps.

Broken glassware poses a safety hazard and should be cleaned up immediately. Every laboratory should have a dustpan and a small brush for cleaning up broken glass. Forceps or tape may be used to pick up small pieces. Alert all laboratory occupants of the hazard to prevent injury.

To prevent injury to laboratory or other personnel, the following procedures should be observed when discarding broken or unusable glassware.

- Discarded glass should be placed in a puncture proof, double lined cardboard box or other container specifically designed for glass disposal. EH&S does not supply these containers. Approved containers may be purchased from VWR on campus, or they may be ordered from another supplier.
- The box must be double lined and securely taped to prevent leaks, and should not weigh more than 20 pounds when filled.
- Clearly label the container “**CAUTION, BROKEN GLASS**”.
- When the container is filled, close it and securely seal it with tape. Carry the container directly to the dumpster.
- **Disposal is the responsibility of the laboratory. EH&S does not pick up these containers for disposal, and the custodial staff does not transport them to the dumpster.**
- Discarded glassware must not be contaminated with infectious waste or radioactive isotopes. If the glassware is contaminated with either of these items, do not place it in the disposal container. Call EH&S at 575-5448 for information and assistance with disposal.
- Discarded glassware must not contain any hazardous chemicals. Empty glassware is not considered to be “hazardous waste” as defined by RCRA. It is permissible to dispose of glassware that has been emptied of liquids or solids, and preferably rinsed, with the rinsate discarded into the liquid hazardous waste container. *Do not dispose of liquids in the glassware container.*
- Never use the discarded glass container to dispose of other sharps. These should be placed in an approved “SHARPS” container (available for purchase directly from VWR or other supplier).