Biohazardous Waste and Sharps Disposal

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***Preamble***

*Biohazardous sharps and other biohazardous waste must be handled in specific ways, in order to comply with institutional, local, state and federal laws, policy and guidelines. This policy will outline how to safely and compliantly dispose of biohazard contaminated sharps and other biohazard contaminated waste.*

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# Definitions

## Biohazard: Any bacteria, recombinant DNA, synthetic DNA, recombinant (genetically modified) organisms, fungi, viruses, rickettsia, chlamydiae, parasites, allergens, viroids, virions, and prions that can be harmful to humans, animals, plants, or the environment.

## Biosafety Level: The level of containment, on a scale of BSL-1 to BSL-4, under which the biohazard can be safely handled. As the biosafety level rises, the standards for laboratory practices, equipment, and facilities increase. The containment levels for animals housed in biosafety laboratories are called animal biosafety levels (ABSL). The NIH Guidelines and *Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories Manual* define the minimum standards that must be met at each biosafety level.

## Biohazardous Waste: Cultures, stocks, sharps, PPE, or any other item contaminated with a biohazard or pathological waste, including blood, body fluids, and animal or human tissues, excludes teeth and fixed tissues.

## Sharps – needles, scalpels, pipette tips, or any other item that could cause wounding to personnel, or punctures of soft sided disposal, storage, or containment vessel(s).

# Scope

## This policy applies to Biosafety level 2 and lower laboratories that produce biohazardous waste, including biohazardous sharps waste, at any UI campus or research center.

# Policy

## This policy ensures compliance with institutional, local, state, and federal mandates for the handling of biohazardous waste and biohazardous sharps.

# Procedures – Decontamination

# *All items must be decontaminated prior to disposal:*

## Biohazardous liquid waste

### Add appropriate disinfectant for contact time

### Once contact time is completed, dispose of by pouring down the drain to sanitary sewer, or in accordance with disinfectant requirements

### If disinfectant is considered a hazardous material, contact EH&S for disposal

## Biohazardous solid waste

### Place in leak-proof autoclavable biohazard bag that is clearly labelled with the universal biohazard symbol

### Autoclave or incinerate, as indicated for the agent and specified in the lab specific biosafety manual

#### Prior to autoclaving, place an “x” in autoclave indicator tape over the universal biohazard symbol

#### After autoclaving, place biohazard bag into a black trash bag, and seal prior to disposal

#### Laboratory staff immediately dispose of properly bagged waste in the dumpster

## Biohazardous sharps waste

### Place in hard-walled, puncture resistant, leak-proof, sealable container that is clearly labelled with the universal biohazard symbol

 *Note: Sharps containers are single use containers and should not be emptied and reused.*

### Autoclave or incinerate, as indicated for the agent and specified in the lab specific biosafety manual

#### Prior to autoclaving, place an “x” in autoclave indicator tape over the universal biohazard symbol, or over the sharps label

#### After autoclaving, place biohazard container into a cardboard box, seal well with tape, and label box as “non-hazardous sharps”

#### Laboratory staff immediately dispose of properly labelled and well-sealed box in the dumpster

# References

## Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories

## University of Idaho Institutional Biosafety Committee Policies