



Introduction

Conducting a waste audit is an informative way of accessing the waste stream generated by the university. A variety of materials are introduced into campus waste, the majority posing minimal hazards. However, some wastes pose significant health hazards and must be handled carefully.

Waste that is contaminated with human or animal bodily fluids or feces is assumed to be infectious. Such waste is often mixed with other non-infectious wastes in the trash. Therefore, all mixed wastes should be handled as if they are potentially infectious.

Lead-acid batteries, sharps, chemicals, and other potentially hazardous items are often disposed of improperly in the regular trash. Report hazardous items and don't handle them until a safe plan is developed. Assume unknown chemicals are hazardous until proven safe. Keep absorbent material close by to contain spills and leaks.

Do's

- Always assume infectious or chemical wastes are present in mixed waste and protect yourself with gloves and eye protection.
- Remove your gloves properly to avoid touching the contaminated surface with your skin.
- Always wash your hands thoroughly after removing your gloves.
- Wear a dust mask for comfort, especially if the trash you're sorting generates visible dust.
- Use tools as much as possible instead of your gloved hands.
- Report strong acids, bases, or toxic chemicals immediately.
- Get help lifting heavy items.
- Have Class ABC fire extinguishers nearby.

Don'ts

- Don't handle trash, bins, or tools used to sort trash with your bare hands.
- Don't touch your face with dirty gloves.
- Don't handle needles, glass, or other sharp items with only nitrile gloves.
- Don't hesitate to report items you're unsure about, especially if they may pose a risk.

