Why Didn't the Custodian Pick Up My Trash?

SafetyNet #: 12

Your regular trash and other waste will not be picked up by Custodial Services if it contains hazardous materials or anything that looks like hazardous materials or if it is not properly labeled and packaged. These restrictions serve two purposes:

1. To protect custodians and other waste handlers from exposure to hazardous materials. While waste handling procedures minimize handling of trash and require that employees wear gloves and other personal protection, exposures still may occur if laboratory waste is not disposed of properly. Employees have received puncture wounds from sharp objects or broken glass protruding through the plastic trash bags. Unknown powders and liquids loose in the regular trash have spilled or splashed onto employees during trash collection. These can be dangerous and frightening accidents.

2. If the trash contains materials that have been improperly disposed of, custodians are protecting the campus’ interests. The Yolo County Environmental Health Department performs monthly landfill inspections and checks waste loads to keep hazardous materials out of the campus landfill. Inappropriate materials found in the landfill or collection vehicles may result in campus personnel retrieving the material from the load, and reporting the improper disposal to other regulatory agencies and/or the Yolo County District Attorney’s office.

Custodians will not pick up the following materials:

MEDICAL WASTE AND BIOHAZARDS:

- Red medical waste bags. Medical/biohazardous waste in red bags will not be accepted at the landfill.
- Bloodstained items in regular trash. These items must be properly bagged and sealed and treated as Biotech/Biohazardous waste.
- Biological cultures in regular trash not properly bagged and autoclaved. All biological cultures must be autoclaved prior to disposal.
- Dead animals or animal parts in regular waste. Animal carcasses and parts must be bagged and placed in specific containers for off-campus disposal.
- Animal bedding and/or fur in regular waste that is not bagged and sealed. These items must be properly bagged and sealed.
- Autoclaved liquid waste. Liquid medical/biohazardous wastes should be decontaminated and disposed of via the sanitary sewer. Non-medical/non-biohazardous liquids can be disposed of via sanitary sewer.
Do not pour any liquids in the storm drain. See SafetyNet #3 [1], “Guidelines for the Disposal of Sharps, Biological and Medical Waste” for more information.

CHEMICALS:

- Chemical bottles or cans left for collection that are not completely empty, are still capped or have labels that have not been defaced. Glass and plastic containers should be recycled through the campus R-4 program if possible. Alternatively, empty glass and plastic containers may be disposed of in a sturdy, sealed, dry lab glass box. SafetyNet #124 [2], "Empty Container Management" has more detailed information about the management of empty chemical containers.
- Unknown powder in regular waste containers that is not double-bagged and sealed.
- Liquid remaining in containers and centrifuge vessels.
- Any containers with hazardous waste labels. See SafetyNet #8 [3], “Guidelines for Disposal of Chemical Waste” for more information.

LABORATORY GLASSWARE:

- Lab glass in regular waste container.
- Lab glass box not sturdy, sealed, and dry (wet bottom).
- Total lab glass box weight more than 40 pounds.
- Lab glass box improperly labeled. The box must be properly marked with “clean lab glass”. See SafetyNet #3 [1], “Guidelines for the Disposal of Sharps, Biological and Medical Waste” for more information.

RADIATION:

- Radiation sign not defaced on any items or empty boxes put into the regular waste receptacle. The laboratory is responsible for ensuring that no radioactive material is improperly disposed. Once the item has been surveyed and declared clean, all labels and markings must be defaced. See SafetyNet #9 [4] “Guidelines for the Disposal of Radioactive Waste” for more information.

SHARPS:

- “Sharps” such as needles, syringes, lancets, scalpels and razor blades in regular waste container.
- “Sharps” containers must not be placed in regular waste receptacle. See SafetyNet #3 [1], “Guidelines for the Disposal of Sharps, Biological and Medical Waste” for more information.

Contact

Hazardous Materials & Waste Management
hazwaste@ucdavis.edu 530-754-5058
FAX: 530-752-4527

More information
Related content

1. Guidelines for Disposal of Sharps, Biological, and Medical Waste
2. Empty Container Management
3. Guidelines for Disposal of Chemical Waste

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