

FACT SHEET: Sharps & Broken Glass Disposal Safety Guidelines



Sharps are devices or objects with corners, edges, or projections capable of cutting or piercing the skin or regular waste bags. Local and state laws regulate disposal of sharps to protect laboratory employees and waste handlers from both physical and contamination hazards that sharps pose. Laboratory sharps include: needles, scalpels, razor blades, glass pipettes, broken glassware, glass capillary tubes, microscope slides, broken wafers, and other physically hazardous sharp objects. Designated sharps containers for contaminated and uncontaminated sharps are discussed below.

NEED TO KNOW:

- Do not put sharps, broken glass, or glass items that could easily break into the regular trash.
- Select the appropriate sharps disposal container for sharps waste.
- Request hazardous waste pickups in [SciShield](#) by using the “Waste” tab in your group entry.
- Questions? Contact OEHS at oehs@tulane.edu.

MORE INFO:



LABORATORY GLASSWARE:

Collect clean or decontaminated broken or disposable lab glassware in plastic-lined, rigid disposal boxes (available through OEHS-approved vendors). **DO NOT** place needles, syringes, or lancets in these containers.

- Glass waste must be contamination-free and **NOT** contain free-flowing liquids.
- Deface glass bottles/vials prior to disposal.
- **DO NOT** overfill boxes or fiber drums.
- Use [ServiceWave](#) to request pickup of glass waste when 80% full.



CHEMICALLY CONTAMINATED SHARPS:

Collect chemically contaminated sharps/broken glass (e.g., Pasteur pipettes with silica, heavy metals, acutely toxic hazardous materials, or other particularly hazardous chemicals) in a rigid, leak-proof, and puncture-resistant container. Request containers via OEHS.

- Use a Green Chemical Sharps container or other puncture-proof container (empty paint cans, etc). Green Sharps Containers are available from research supply vendors.
- **DO NOT** use RED sharps containers for sharps that are not contaminated with Biohazards.
- Apply an adhesive waste label or waste tag to identify the containers. Adhesive labels/tags are available through Tulane Hazmat or Lab Safety inspectors.
- Apply a hazardous waste label to the containers.
- Request a pickup in [SciShield](#) when container is 80% full.



BIOHAZARD CONTAMINATED SHARPS:

Collect sharps contaminated with biohazards or radioactive materials (e.g., needles, coverslips and slides, and glass Pasteur pipettes) in a RED sharps container.

- RED sharps containers are available from research supply companies.
- Containers must display a biohazard symbol.
- **DO NOT** fill beyond the “fill line”; sharps must **NOT** protrude through the container opening.
- Request a pickup via [ServiceWave](#). Direct questions to biosafety@tulane.edu.



! IMPORTANT NOTE:

Biohazardous plastic pipette tips and serological pipettes can be safely disposed in a sharps container or a red biohazard bag. A red bag is preferred for large quantities.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- OSHA: [Chemical Hygiene Plan Fact Sheet](#)
- Tulane University: [OP-25: Hazardous Waste Management](#)