



Classification of Waste

Background

The range of processes that are undertaken as part of the day-to-day activities of the University of Glasgow generate a wide spectrum of waste types. Producers of waste within the University have a duty to comply with the legislative requirements, including their duty of care and a duty to segregate waste streams, as far as is practical (further information on duty of care in waste storage and disposal is available on Safety and Environmental Protection Service's (SEPS) web site). Furthermore, correct segregation and streaming are essential pre-requisites to the correct and cost effective disposal of waste.

The Note outlines the main classifications and streams of waste produced within the University. When disposing of waste you should also be guided by the University approved supplier of waste disposal services who may have specific procedures and requirements that should be adopted.

Controlled Waste

Most waste which is produced within the University is defined as Controlled Waste (also sometimes known as Directive Waste). Much of this waste is of very low hazard and can be disposed in the same way as we would dispose of our waste at home; that is it can be placed in a suitable receptacle (e.g. dustbin) for routine uplift and disposal by an approved supplier. The arrangements for disposal of this low hazard waste are managed by Estates & Buildings. The University strives to act sustainably and to protect the environment and, in line with this, recycles waste wherever practicable. Further information on how to recycle waste can be obtained by contacting Estates & Buildings.

There are two principal categories of controlled waste arising in the University that may require more careful management by producers and for which there are special segregation and disposal requirements: waste electronic and electrical equipment (WEEE) and special waste (including waste that is hazardous due to biological properties).

In addition some activities produce radioactive waste. Radioactive waste is not classified as controlled waste, none the less it is subject to strict control under a different legislative framework. Management units that propose to undertake activities that would generate radioactive waste should contact Radiation Protection Service for guidance and information.

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)

During 2006 legislation introduced a requirement for the separate collection, treatment, recovery and environmentally sound disposal of electrical and electronic equipment when it becomes waste. In consequence you **must not place WEEE into any bins, skips etc containing general**

waste. WEEE must be segregated and disposed *via* a specialist disposal company. Further information on the routes available for the disposal of WEEE is available on SEPS web site. It is essential to note that some WEEE may also be special waste (see below) as a result of its hazardous properties (e.g. TVs, refrigeration equipment and computer monitors).

Special Waste

Special waste can, broadly, be defined as waste that is hazardous. As a result of its hazardous nature there are additional controls that apply to its disposal. Special waste must be segregated from other waste streams and you must engage a suitable licensed contractor to arrange its disposal. Further information on the duty of care that relates to special waste is available on SEPS web site. The University has appointed approved suppliers to deliver an uplift and disposal service for special waste.

Information on identifying special waste is given on SEPS web site.

Clinical Waste

The law defines clinical waste as:

'Any waste which consists wholly or partly of human or animal tissues, blood or other body fluids, excretions, drugs, or other pharmaceutical products, swabs or dressings, syringes, needles or other sharp instruments, being waste which unless rendered safe may prove hazardous to any person coming into contact with it.'

and

'Any other waste arising from medical, nursing, dental, veterinary, pharmaceutical or similar practice, investigation, treatment, care, teaching or research, or the collection of blood for transfusion, being waste which may cause infection to any person coming into contact with it.'

Clinical waste is, by definition, hazardous or infectious so it is also special waste.

Clinical waste must be segregated from the main waste stream and you must engage the University approved supplier that has been appointed to deliver the uplift and disposal service for this waste stream.

Several work activities within the University generate waste which could be perceived as being clinical waste despite the fact it poses no actual risk of infection and is not special waste. Such waste might include needles and syringes used in workshops etc. All sharps waste must be contained in a suitable container that is designed to prevent 'needlestick' type injuries during its handling. Information on suitable containers can be found in the SEPS Guidance Note 'The Avoidance of 'Needlestick' and Similar Sharp Induces Injuries'. It is University policy that waste sharps and syringes must be sent for incineration or undergo some alternative form of treatment that renders them unusable and unrecognisable, even if they do not pose any risk of infection. If you require further advice on the disposal of perceived clinical waste should contact SEPS.

Radioactive Waste

Radioactive Waste may only be disposed in accordance with an authorisation granted by the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) and is subject to strict conditions.

Radioactive Waste, which has additional hazardous properties, as described earlier, may also be special waste.

Further information on the legislative requirements and on safe disposal of radioactive waste can be obtained from Radiation Protection Service.

Further Information

You should note that this is an interpretation and summary of the relevant legislation. If you are in doubt about the classification of waste then it should be consigned as special waste. Alternatively contact SEPS for assistance with a more detailed assessment of the waste.

