

University of Pittsburgh Safety Manual	EH&S Guideline Number: 03-018	
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DISPOSAL OF LABORATORY GLASSWARE

Broken, used, or unwanted glassware is a common type of waste generated in the laboratory. Improper disposal of glassware can lead to injury of those handling laboratory waste. All laboratory glassware including empty containers, pipettes, slides, plates, tubes, flasks, and beakers should be properly handled for disposal.

1. Laboratory Glassware Disposal

Broken/used/unwanted laboratory glassware should be disposed in boxes designed for this purpose. These boxes, identified as broken glass boxes, can be obtained from the University's Biological Sciences Stockroom (<http://www.pitt.edu/~biohome/Dept/Frame/stockroom.htm>) or directly from vendors.

2. Contaminated Glassware

2.1. Glassware that has been contaminated with biological materials must be decontaminated using an EPA-registered disinfectant prior to being placed into a broken glass box.

2.2. Any biologically-contaminated glass must be handled as a contaminated sharp (similar to a needle or other sharp). These items must be placed into a sharps container and disposed with biological waste.

2.3. Glass that has been in contact with chemicals should be handled per the University's Empty Chemical Container Disposal Guidelines prior to being placed in a broken glass box. (<http://www.ehs.pitt.edu/assets/docs/empty-chem-disposal.pdf>)

3. Restrictions

The following materials should **NEVER** be disposed of in a broken glass box:

- Contaminated glassware;
- Sharps, needles, sharps, syringes;
- Mercury-containing materials (thermometers, manometers, etc.);
- Biological materials;
- Chemicals;
- Radioactive materials.

4. Disposal Preparation

Once the broken glass box is $\frac{3}{4}$ full, follow the manufacturer's closing instructions and seal the top with tape. Then, the broken glass box can be disposed in the regular trash.