

Introduction

Embalming and cadaver fluids are hazardous liquids that have the potential to damage people and the environment. These fluids, once removed from the cadaver, are chemical waste and must be stored and discarded according to federal and state hazardous waste laws. This procedure is intended to ensure that all embalming and cadaver fluids are stored in a safe manner and disposed of in accordance with the laws and applies to all Eastern Washington University (EWU) anatomy labs.



Embalming Fluid

Embalming fluid is flammable and toxic. It must be handled, stored, and disposed of properly to keep people and the environment safe. Individuals working with cadavers should always wear a lab coat, gloves, and goggles. Used embalming fluids and preservatives are treated as “chemical” hazardous waste, not biological waste.

Some people may be extremely sensitive to the chemicals that make up embalming fluid. Anyone who experiences headaches or nausea when entering the anatomy lab should let their instructor or supervisor know immediately.

Fluid Collection

Embalming fluid is generally collected temporarily in buckets next to the cadaver and then transferred into a 10-gallon metal drum in the Satellite Waste Accumulation area of the anatomy lab (Currently located in ISC 214a). Embalming fluid from display samples and specimens must be added to the 10-gallon can for disposal. The following is a list of steps to take to safely contain the waste:

- Bucket lids should be modified to attach to the table’s drainage hose.
- **Lids must always be sealed on the buckets** to contain potentially harmful vapors. Remove the lid only for transfer to the drum.
- **Do not overfill containers.** Leave approximately 2 inches of headspace (empty space) at the top of the bucket or drum.
 - When buckets are full, or at the end of lab, transfer the contents into the drum.
 - When drums are full, close the cap and start using a new drum. Request a drum pick-up as soon as possible.
- **Clean up spills promptly** to limit exposure to hazardous chemicals and vapors. A spill kit is available in the lab for cleaning up minor spills.

Remember: buckets and drums must be closed except during filling. We can be cited and fined by outside regulators for any waste containers that are not closed during an inspection.

Fluid Labeling

State and Federal laws require that all hazardous materials be appropriately labeled. The buckets and drums must be labeled with the following information:

- The phrase “Hazardous Waste Accumulation Container” on the drum
- Toxic/Poison sticker (skull and crossbones)
- Flammable Liquid sticker (flame symbol)
- Chemical components with total percent of each chemical. No chemical abbreviations or chemical formulas.

Stickers with all the required information have been provided for both buckets and drums. Email Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) at envhea@ewu.edu to request additional waste stickers.

Waste Pick-up

Submit a Hazardous Waste Pick Up Request form on the EH&S website ([Link Here](#)) to notify EH&S that a drum is full. EH&S will replace full drums with empty ones during the pick-up.

If a new drum is needed urgently, submit the [online form](#) and then call the EH&S offices at (509) 359-6496 to alert EH&S of the immediate need.

Waste Accumulation Requirements

Washington State has legal requirements for individuals who generate hazardous waste. These requirements include training and inspections.

Training

Anyone who generates hazardous waste at EWU is required to take Hazardous Waste Training annually. This training is provided by EH&S and introduces waste generators to their responsibilities and the hazards they may encounter.

Inspections

The law requires that areas where hazardous waste is accumulated must be inspected weekly to ensure that all waste is properly contained and that none of the waste containers are leaking. Anatomy labs must designate someone to inspect the drums and buckets weekly. The inspections must be recorded on the Generator Inspection Record form (<https://in.ewu.edu/ehs/wp-content/uploads/sites/116/2018/03/Generator-Inspection-Record-1.pdf>).

REVISION HISTORY		
Rev	Affected Page	Change Descriptions
0	All	Release 6/2/12
1	All	Changes on the first & second page. Added Flammable reference, Changed 20 gal to 10 gal first page. Add flammable symbols and change waste content on the second page. 6/18/15
2	All	Update to New Format 4/25/2017
3	All	Edit MS 3/19/2020, edit ER 4/14/2020
4	All	Edit JPS 3/14/23