

# WHAT DO I DO WITH MY EMPTIES?

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If you use chemical products or lab chemicals, you probably empty a bottle occasionally. What do you do with it?

Improperly-disposed containers can expose custodians and the public to hazardous chemicals, can create legal liability for you and the university, and can even explode at the disposal facility.

## WHAT TO DO

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- Remove any residual chemicals from the bottle & dispose of them properly.
- If the chemical is on the EPA “P” or “U” list, rinse the container three times with a compatible solvent and dispose of the rinse liquid properly. The person responsible for managing your waste Satellite Accumulation Area should know what chemicals these are, or you can check <http://www.epa.gov/wastes/hazard/wastetypes/listed.htm>. Note that the list includes some common chemicals such as acetonitrile, acetone, and formaldehyde.
- Allow the container to dry in a chemical fume hood.
- Remove the label or with a marker, permanently obliterate the name and any hazard indicators (words like “flammable” or hazard pictograms), then mark the bottle “EMPTY” or “MT.”
- Remove the container top/seal and discard the container in the nonhazardous lab trash or the biohazard box. (Don’t overfill the biohazard box: maximum weight 40 lbs.)
- Dispose of empty containers that contained radioisotopes as instructed by the Radiation Safety Office.
- DON’T just throw it in the trash or biohazard box.
- DON’T put it in a recycling bin (chemical bottles use a non-recyclable glass).
- DON’T set it in the hallway—it’s a trip & breakage hazard.