

EMPTY CHEMICAL CONTAINERS

Empty chemical containers may be regulated by the EPA; therefore, it is important to follow this fact sheet when disposing of empty chemical containers.

The EPA defines a container as empty when all chemicals have been removed using standard methods for that container type (e.g., pouring, pumping, dumping, or scraping), and **no more than 3% by weight of the container's total capacity remains** if it held less than 119 gallons. Please ensure you empty all containers to the best of your ability.



Empty containers should be reused, recycled, or disposed of in one of the following ways:

Reused: Empty containers can be repurposed to collect your waste chemicals. Ensure the waste chemicals are compatible with the previous contents and the container (e.g., place used methanol in empty methanol containers). Remove the original labels and re-label the container with the appropriate labels.

Recycled: Empty plastic and aluminum chemical containers can be recycled if they can be safely rinsed inside and out with water. Dispose of the rinse water in the sanitary sewer (sink). Let the containers dry, remove the labels, remove the lids, and place them in the Republic Services Recycling Dumpsters (for plastics and metals) located in the dumpster areas near most campus buildings.

Disposed: All empty glass containers, as well as plastic or metal containers can be safely discarded with general trash. To ensure safety, remove the labels and clearly mark them for disposal. Place them in garbage containers. Do not leave empty containers in hallways, common trash areas, or on loading docks. Keep empty containers within your laboratory space until Custodial Services picks them up for disposal with general trash.

P-listed chemicals: If the container previously contained an acutely toxic waste ([P-Listed](#)), even the residue in the empty containers is considered a hazardous waste. These containers must be disposed of properly by EH&S for proper disposal.

Pesticides: The EPA regulates pesticides under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). This Act requires all empty pesticide containers to be triple rinsed with water or the solvent specified on the label, and the rinse water reused. After triple-rinsing, deface the labels and discard the containers in the garbage. Be sure to check the label directions for any additional requirements.

Aerosol cans: Aerosol cans are pressurized, even when empty, so please see Aerosol Can Fact Sheet for proper disposal guidelines.



If you cannot empty a container or is contained with a P-Listed waste, please submit an online pickup request using the EH&S Chemical/Bio Waste Pickup Request form available at: <https://csn.campusoptics.com/hw/chemical-bio-waste-pick-up-request-form>. Please contact EH&S at 702-651-7445 or ehs@csn.edu if you have any questions.