IDEM Inspection Follow-Up

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) was on campus in May of this year inspecting labs for hazardous waste management compliance. The IDEM inspector visited over forty labs across campus in various departments. An issue found during the inspection in multiple labs was improperly labeled waste containers. Examples of this were containers labeled: “Aqueous Waste”, ”Organic waste”, or “Solid Waste” with no other description.

As soon as the first drop of waste enters a waste container, it must be labeled and clearly marked with words that describe the contents of the waste and the words “Hazardous Waste”. Chemical constituents should be listed in percentage format as accurately as possible. Using an orange Hazardous Waste Disposal Tag provided by REM meets these requirements.

Examples of properly labeled waste collection containers are on the right.

Ethidium Bromide

Ethidium bromide is commonly used in labs throughout campus. It is classified by OSHA as highly toxic by inhalation, harmful by ingestion, and a mutagen. Recent studies have shown ethidium bromide to be non-mutagenic in mice and rats, however; its metabolites can be mutagenic. Precautions such as proper eye-wear, gloves, and liners should be used when working with ethidium bromide. If pure or aerosolized forms are being used, all work should take place in a fume hood. A standard operating procedure for ethidium bromide is available on the REM website.

Ethidium bromide contaminated debris and solutions should be disposed of through REM. If possible, gels should be dried to reduce weight and the chance of leaking. Liquid should be limited as much as possible when storing and disposing of solid waste. Ideally, solid waste should be bagged and inside another container, such as a bucket. Solid waste can also be picked up in trash bags as long as they are double bagged, closed, and not heavy. Cardboard boxes are not recommended for storage of debris.

Questions? Comments? Concerns?
Contact Ashley
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Container Returns

REM staff will return waste containers that are 5 gallons or larger, labeled, and in good condition. Return times can vary depending on the waste type. This can take up to 6 weeks after the waste has been picked up.

Broken Glass Disposal

Always line the cardboard box with a heavy trash bag and seal the bag when full. Close the box according to the manufacturer’s directions and tape the top and bottom to ensure the box is secure.

Once full and closed, REM will pick up these containers if they are contaminat-ed. If the broken glass is clean, the building’s custodians will dispose of the boxes.

OK to dispose of:
- Pipettes
- Broken glass
- Contaminated glass/debris
- Nitrile gloves

Not OK:
- Bottles with liquid
- Chemical containers (empty or not)
- Needles
- Biological or infectious material
- Empty boxes/Trash

Dry Ice Shipments

Did you know that shipping your samples with dry ice is against the law without the proper training and certification?

REM can assist you with the required certification. If you’re not a frequent shipper or just don’t feel like doing it, REM can handle the shipping for you!

Call 4-0121 for more information on dry ice shipping.