

EHS-23 - EMPTY CHEMICAL CONTAINERS

WHAT IS EMPTY

According to hazardous waste regulations, most chemical containers are "empty" if you have used "normal means", such as inverting, shaking and scraping, to empty the container. A small amount of remaining residue is allowed.

If the chemical is an EPA "acute"¹ hazardous waste:

1. Triple rinse the container with a compatible solvent, collecting the rinsates into a separate, compatible screw-top container.
2. Dispose of the rinsates as hazardous waste.
3. If the container cannot be emptied, it will be managed as hazardous waste.

CONTAINER REUSE

If you plan to reuse your empty chemical container for a compatible chemical or hazardous waste:

1. Deface or remove the original label.
2. Place a new label on the container, either:
 - a. OSHA-compliant (name and hazard) or
 - b. Hazardous Waste, per instruction in *Hazardous Waste Training*.

CONTAINER DISPOSAL

1. Remove the cap/lid.
2. Deface the label.
3. Place in:
 - a. SET 210, for 3 gallon metal cans.
 - b. Trash, for all other containers.

WHY REMOVE THE CAP/LID?

University and City personnel handle the trash and recyclables. Caps and lids are removed to prevent containers from becoming pressurized during compaction in the trash vehicle which may result in residues spraying onto workers.

AEROSOL CANS

Aerosol cans require special management and disposal. They are hazardous due to the pressure in the can, and possibly because of the contents. Do not discard in the regular trash.

If your area generates a sufficient quantity of aerosol cans to require a collection container, contact the Dept. of Environmental Health & Safety at X4804.

If you occasionally generate an aerosol can, you may give it to the Environmental Services personnel in your building.

WHAT IF I HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS?

Contact the Dept. of Environmental Health & Safety at X4804.

REFERENCES

- Alabama Department of Environmental Management, *Hazardous Waste Program*, Chapter 14
- 40 CFR 261.7 - Residues of hazardous waste in empty containers.
- UNA Safety and Health Manual, Chapter 7, *Hazardous Waste Disposal*

¹ – See *Acute Hazardous Waste List* on the EHS website, or 40 CFR 261.31 and 261.33 for list.