

Chemical Waste Recharge

In 1991, the Chancellor announced that the campus would recharge departments for chemical waste disposal. In accordance with this directive, and with guidance from the campus Recharge Committee, the Office of Environment, Health & Safety (EH&S) recharges campus departments for the treatment and disposal of chemical waste that the campus sends off site.

How are the recharge rates determined?

EH&S sends hazardous chemical waste generated by the campus to several facilities that treat or dispose of chemicals. EH&S derives the recharge rates for hazardous chemical waste from the rates charged by the waste disposal/treatment facilities plus the costs for transportation, contractor labor, packaging materials, and other supplies. In addition, a nominal per-item charge is included in the recharge rate to encourage consolidation of *compatible* wastes.

The cost of disposal/treatment of different chemical wastes can vary widely. The recharge rate schedule reflects this by specifying a rate for each type of waste generated on campus. A general waste category called "other waste" is listed in the recharge rate schedule to include wastes not otherwise listed and for projects requiring excessive contract labor. A chemical analysis must be performed on all unlabeled or improperly labeled chemicals to categorize their hazards prior to pickup. This analysis requires extra labor, and EH&S adds a fee for the analysis to the cost of disposing of the item.

The goal of the Chemical Waste Recharge Program is to collect 100 percent of outside contractor cost for waste disposal. Periodically, contractor rates change; therefore, the recharge rates must be adjusted accordingly. The campus Recharge Committee reviews the rates and the method for deriving them annually. The faculty Hazardous Waste Management Committee also reviews campus waste disposal costs and recommends ways to fund waste disposal.

The on-line material packing list (eMPL) system for requesting waste pickups automatically estimates your cost for waste disposal. Access the eMPL system at mpl.ehs.berkeley.edu and follow the instructions for completing an eMPL. Note that you will need a CalNet ID to access the eMPL system.

When completing the Item Name field, be sure to choose a name using the Search ChemIndex button. This will access the EH&S database that contains recharge rates, and the eMPL will automatically calculate your disposal cost, based on the amount (weight or volume) you enter for disposal. Note that if you enter a chemical name without using the Search ChemIndex button, the system will not provide a cost estimate.

If you do not find an appropriate chemical name using the Search ChemIndex button, or if you are submitting a paper MPL, call EH&S at 642-3073 for an estimate of your recharge costs. You can also view the complete list of current recharge rates for chemical waste disposal at <http://recharge-fs.vcbf.berkeley.edu>.

How can I calculate my expected recharge costs?



How can I minimize my recharge costs?

The best way to minimize costs is to minimize the generation of hazardous waste. This can be done in several ways. See the EH&S Fact Sheet, "Minimizing Hazardous Waste," for source reduction and waste minimization tips.

Where the generation of hazardous waste cannot be prevented, several actions can minimize the cost of managing the hazardous waste.

- Do not mix small amounts of hazardous waste into a non hazardous substance, such as water, because the entire amount may have to be treated as hazardous waste.
- Avoid mixing hazardous wastes with different components. For example, adding acids or bases into solvent wastes may alter the pH sufficiently to shift them from the less expensive solvent category into the more expensive corrosive waste category.
- Request a pickup of peroxide formers promptly. If kept too long, they may require special handling as potentially explosive chemicals, increasing both the cost and the risks to the waste handlers.
- Ensure accurate and complete labeling. Unlabeled wastes of unknown composition must be managed as "unknowns" and require expensive testing before they can be disposed of. Mislabeled waste can present health and safety risks to handlers, result in fines and violations, and increase costs.

EH&S is available to help laboratory staff find ways to minimize their wastes and their costs. This benefits all of us: EH&S obtains the complete information it needs to manage your waste in the best way, and campus users save money

Call EH&S at 642-3073 for more information and for individual assistance.

