

Minimizing Hazardous Waste

What is waste minimization?

Waste minimization is any action that decreases the amount of hazardous waste generated or reduces the toxicity of the waste generated in your work area.

What are the benefits of waste minimization?

Waste minimization benefits you, your colleagues, and the environment by

- Lowering your waste disposal costs
- Reducing health hazards
- Reducing long-term liability for disposal
- Promoting environmental awareness
- Preventing pollution

Tips for waste minimization

These simple practices can help you minimize waste in your lab or work area:

- Maintain good housekeeping:
- Clearly mark the contents of all containers of hazardous materials.
- Keep an up-to-date inventory of all hazardous materials. See the EH&S Fact Sheet [Chemical Inventory](#).
- Substitute less hazardous chemicals for hazardous ones.
- Look for others in your department who could use your unwanted chemicals.
- Gear instruments and equipment to generate the least amount of waste possible.
- Reduce the scale of processes so that less waste is generated.
- Treat or destroy hazardous by-products as the last step in experiments.
- Include waste minimization in student and employee training sessions.
- Contact the Office of Environment, Health & Safety (EH&S) at 642-3073 for additional waste minimization tips.

To learn more

EH&S offers no-cost instruction on minimizing hazardous waste to campus departments. For information, contact the Hazardous Materials Management team at 642-3073.

