

## Temporary Changes to Waste Management

This document provides clarification and FAQs on Temporary Changes in NIH Waste Management Services for the NIH Bethesda Campus during the Coronavirus pandemic. The NIH Clinical Center at Building 10, Magnuson Center patient care areas and Hatfield Center areas should follow their currently established waste management guidelines; for questions please contact [CCMMDHousekeeping@mail.nih.gov](mailto:CCMMDHousekeeping@mail.nih.gov). If you have questions or concerns regarding waste management at another location (i.e. RTP, RML, Leased Facilities), please contact the POC listed in the table at the end of this guidance.

### General Trash:

In order to promote physical distancing during day-to-day operations, custodians will suspend their pickup of trash in individual offices, workstations, and labs. In addition to these changes, custodians will focus on frequently cleaning restrooms, elevator lobbies, building entrances and high touch surfaces. As a result of this change in housekeeping activities, building occupants must bring their individual trash to collection bins located in the corridors (a picture of the collection bins located in the hallways is shown below).

For custodial questions, please contact Eugene Howie at [howiee@ors.od.nih.gov](mailto:howiee@ors.od.nih.gov) or 301-594-7698. For issues with supplies or service, please call 301-435-8000.



### Recycling Pickup Service Change:

#### Laboratory Pickup:

In addition to the previous guidance, laboratory recycling pickup service will **remain as is** for labs with the following changes:

- To help minimize risk, recycling staff will be available to pick up lab recyclables **on call**. The recycling staff will notify the requestor to schedule the pickup and the requestor must wear a face covering and maintain social distancing when the pickup occurs. If a container is full, please call the Office of Research Facilities, Division of Environmental Protection (DEP) at 301-496-7990 or ESI at 301-402-6349 or email [mansi.mehta@nih.gov](mailto:mansi.mehta@nih.gov) to submit your pickup request.

### Office Areas Pickup:

To reduce person-to-person interaction, recycling staff will not enter office suites or office break rooms. Please empty your recyclables into the designated recycling containers, which are typically located in the hallways or near elevators. Please do not overfill the containers in the hallways or leave your recyclables on the floor near the containers. If a container is full or a pickup is needed, please call the Office of Research Facilities, Division of Environmental Protection (DEP) at 301-496-7990 or ESI at 301-402-6349.

### Collection of Disposable Face Coverings:

#### Laboratory:

Disposable face coverings that are worn in the laboratory as part of the mandatory face coverings requirement for COVID-19, should be disposed of as general trash.

**Building 10 (CRC, ACRF and Magnuson):** Follow established protocols for Building 10, [http://intranet.cc.nih.gov/hospitalepidemiology/emerging\\_infectious\\_diseases.html](http://intranet.cc.nih.gov/hospitalepidemiology/emerging_infectious_diseases.html). There are no further changes as of the date of this publication.

#### General Population:



If disposable face coverings are worn in lieu of cloth masks by the NIH public to comply with NIH Safety Guidance for return to the physical workplace, these coverings should be discarded into properly identified step cans. Step cans will be placed at the exit doors of heavily occupied buildings, parking garages and parking lots. Please discard face coverings and other protective items responsibly in trash receptacles and not on the ground. Please visit the following link to view step can locations on the NIH Bethesda campus: <https://go.usa.gov/xwgDB>. To reduce the risk to staff and waste handlers, do not fill the containers more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  full.

Please note that the guidance provided above is to assist with collection of disposable face coverings and to reduce contamination to our recycling stream. In addition to disposable face coverings, please only place non-serviceable cloth masks and gloves into these step cans. For further questions, please contact Mansi Mehta at [mansi.mehtata@nih.gov](mailto:mansi.mehtata@nih.gov) or 240-461-2246.



### Medical Pathological Waste (MPW):

MPW boxes will continue to be collected from the designated locations at each laboratory building. All labs and animal facilities should follow their existing protocols for disposing MPW and PPE waste. If your lab requires an MPW box, they can be obtained online through the NIH Supply Center or visit one of the self-service stores on the Bethesda Campus:

- Building 10 Room B2B41: Phone: 301-496-2051 
- Building 31 Room B1A47: Phone: 301-496-4430 

Please visit [NIH Waste Disposal Guide Page-12](#) for proper packaging and labeling procedures of MPW.

### Chemical and Radiological Waste Service Notable Changes:

Please note: the changes below outline new PPE use, physical distancing measures, as well as additional operational measures to be taken by the waste contractor. If at any time you have concerns related to chemical waste or radiological waste services, please contact the corresponding waste services phone number listed at the bottom of this section.

- Chemical and radioactive waste contractors will utilize appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and always maintain a 6ft distance from customers.
- Transport carts and vehicles are sanitized daily prior to collection of waste.
- Phone calls will be made to the customer prior to collection. Please note that hazardous waste containers cannot be left in the hallway. Place containers at your lab door only after the call confirming the waste pickup crew is about to arrive, in order to minimize lab entry by waste contractors.
  - For chemical waste pickup - the occupants place the waste in an agreed upon secure location that reduces person-to-person contact. If a circular waste tray is

needed to safely move the chemical waste container, please contact Chemical Waste Service at 301-496-4710.

- For radioactive waste pickup - radioactive waste should never be left unattended to ensure proper security. All attempts will be made to minimize person-to-person contact.
- If email communication is preferred, those details can be discussed between the waste generator and the waste handler for future pickups.
- For customers with scheduled reoccurring pickups (chemical or radioactive), a phone call will be placed to the customer to discuss if a pickup is needed. The goal of this approach is to reduce unwanted pickups and person-to-person interaction if it is not needed.
- For chemical waste pickups, solvent recovery containers will be wiped down using an approved EPA disinfectant prior to delivering to the NIH researcher.
- Where possible, the chemical and radioactive waste contractor will make every attempt to assign dedicated personnel to specific buildings/collection routes to reduce person-to-person interaction.
- Due to the potential of the NIH community working in shifts and during weekends, waste pickup timeframes may vary; therefore, communication between the customer and the waste contractor may be needed to set up a specific date and time for a future pickup.
- There is a current program in place to monitor worker health and to take immediate actions if an employee develops symptoms.

For further questions related to chemical/radiological waste services, please dial:

Chemical waste:       Chuck Carroll       301-526-9275 or 301-496-4710  
 Radioactive waste:   Andrew Cabot       301-827-5958 or 301-496-4451

**Waste Management POCs for NIH Campuses:**

For changes to waste management procedures associated with a specific NIH campus, please refer to the table below and contact the appropriate POC.

CAMPUS	POINT OF CONTACT (POC)	CONTACT INFORMATION
Leased Facilities DC Metro	Karen Queen	<a href="mailto:queenk@ors.od.nih.gov">queenk@ors.od.nih.gov</a>
Baltimore	James Pitt	<a href="mailto:pittj@mail.nih.gov">pittj@mail.nih.gov</a>
IRF Frederick	Mark Marshall	<a href="mailto:marshallma@mail.nih.gov">marshallma@mail.nih.gov</a>
RTP	Paul Johnson Paul Poliachik	<a href="mailto:johnso25@niehs.nih.gov">johnso25@niehs.nih.gov</a> <a href="mailto:poliachikp@mail.nih.gov">poliachikp@mail.nih.gov</a>
RML	Barri Twardoski	<a href="mailto:twardoskib@niaid.nih.gov">twardoskib@niaid.nih.gov</a>
Bethesda Main Campus	Matthew Deptola	<a href="mailto:matthew.deptola@nih.gov">matthew.deptola@nih.gov</a>

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### General Trash:

**Question 1:** Will the trash bins be marked to identify the correct container for trash?

**Answer 1:** Yes. The bins will be marked “general trash.” Also see the attached picture above for the container style.

**Question 2:** Will the blue trash containers and glass boxes be picked up?

**Answer 2:** Yes. The containers must be placed in the hallway for removal.

**Question 3:** What is the scheduled time for trash to be removed from corridor receptacles?

**Answer 3:** Trash will be removed between 10am – 12pm and surveilled throughout the day. In addition, trash will be picked up and removed on Friday afternoon to avoid waste sitting until Monday.

**Question 4:** Who do I contact if I have procedural questions regarding the change in general waste services?

**Answer 4:** Please contact Eugene Howie at [eugene.howie@nih.gov](mailto:eugene.howie@nih.gov).

**Question 5:** Who do I contact if the general trash container is overflowing?

**Answer 5:** Call 301-435-8000 and provide them with the necessary information to address the container(s).

### Recycling:

**Question 1:** Who do I contact if the recycle bin is overflowing or a pickup is needed?

**Answer 1:** Call ESI at 301-402-6349 or email [mansi.mehta@nih.gov](mailto:mansi.mehta@nih.gov) to submit your pickup request.

**Question 2:** Will the recycling crew call the occupants prior to pick up?

**Answer 2:** Yes. You will be contacted by phone prior to a scheduled pickup. If the occupant cannot be contacted via phone, the recycling team member will knock on the occupant's door to discuss pickup.

**Question 3:** What if an occupant wants to place the recycling bins outside in the hallway to help minimize risk?

**Answer 3:** This is acceptable. Please note that the occupant must provide the exact location where the recycling bins are located. Please submit your location by calling ESI at 301-402-6349 or email Mansi Mehta at [mansi.mehta@nih.gov](mailto:mansi.mehta@nih.gov).

**Question 4:** What is the scheduled time for recyclables to be removed once a pickup request is placed?

**Answer 4:** Typically, the pickup time frame is 24 hours once the occupant submits the request.

**Question 5:** Who do I contact if I have procedural questions regarding changes in service?

**Answer 5:** Please contact ESI at 301-402-6349 or email Mansi Mehta at [mansi.mehta@nih.gov](mailto:mansi.mehta@nih.gov).

### Medical Pathological Waste:

**Question 1:** Does this guidance apply to animal facilities and laboratory MPW procedures?

**Answer 1:** All labs and animal facilities should follow their routine protocols for disposing MPW and PPE waste.

**Question 2:** Who do I contact if I have procedural questions regarding the change in services?

**Answer 2:** Please email Mansi Mehta at [mansi.mehta@nih.gov](mailto:mansi.mehta@nih.gov).

### Collection of Disposable Face Coverings:

**Question 1:** Who do I contact if step cans are overflowing and a waste pickup is needed?

**Answer 1:** Call ESI at 301-402-6349 or DEP at 301-496-7990 or email [mansi.mehta@nih.gov](mailto:mansi.mehta@nih.gov) to submit your pickup request.

## Radiological Waste:

**Question 1:** Can I still get a daily pickup of my radioactive waste?

**Answer 1:** Yes, Please call 301-496-4451 and schedule a daily pickup. Please keep in mind that radioactive waste contractors will contact your lab each day to ensure the pickup is actually needed. If a pickup is not truly necessary, it will save a lab visit.

**Question 2:** I'm no longer using radioactivity; how can I get rid of my radioactive waste containers?

**Answer 2:** Call the radioactive waste contractor at 301-496-4451 and request that all radioactive waste containers be collected for removal from the lab.

**Question 3:** Do I have to bring my radioactive waste to the hallway for the contractor to pick up?

**Answer 3:** No. Radioactive waste contractors will still enter a lab for the pickup of radioactive waste. Since there may be contamination concerns, as well as security violations for unattended radioactive waste, we do not want these waste containers to be moved by lab staff.

**Question 4:** Can I still request radioactive waste pickups via the DRS Portal?

**Answer 4:** Yes. Authorized Users may log in to the AU Portal at <https://drsportal.ors.od.nih.gov> (or delegate privileges to another lab member) and submit an online request for radioactive waste pickup.

**Question 5:** What if no one is in the lab when the radioactive waste contractors come by to collect the waste? Will I have to reschedule the pickup? How will I know?

**Answer 5:** The radioactive waste contractor will make multiple attempts to collect the waste on the requested day. Phone calls will be made prior to collection to ensure someone is present in the lab. If the waste is not collected, please call to reschedule. If you need to schedule a specific time for pickup, please inform us at the time of the pickup request (phone or portal request).

**Question 6:** I'm in a small lab; how can we maintain social distancing when the radioactive waste contractor is here to collect my waste?

**Answer 6:** It's possible that lab staff will need to step out of the lab while the radioactive waste contractor collects the waste; upon their departure you can re-enter your lab space.

## Chemical Waste

**Question 1:** Can I place my waste containers for pickup in the hallway?

**Answer 1:** No. NIH must maintain environmental compliance. After communication has occurred on the day of scheduled pickup between the waste generator and the waste collection contractor, researchers can place waste containers near the access door to the laboratory in secondary pans.

**Question 2:** Will my containers be picked up if I am not able to receive a call or e-mail for some reason?

**Answer 2:** Yes. If no call or e-mail communication is established, chemical contractors will still attempt to pick up from your lab.

**Question 3:** Can I schedule a specific day for my waste containers to be picked up?

**Answer 3:** Yes. Call Chemical Waste Services at 301-496-4710, Monday-Friday to schedule a pickup.