

Regulated Medical Waste Guidelines

Biological Sciences Support Facility Autoclave Facility

The Biological Sciences Support Facility (B.S.S.F.) autoclave facility accepts liquid and dry materials along with regulated medical waste (RMW) for treatment and sterilization. B.S.S.F. accepts solid RMW in bags, disposable serological pipettes, and sharps waste. All materials must be prepared in accordance with the guidelines below.

Non-permitted items

The following items are **not** allowed to be submitted to the B.S.S.F. Autoclave facility:

- Glass (unless it's in a sharps container)
- Non-contaminated paper towels
- Radioactive materials
- Flammable, reactive, corrosive, toxic, even if mixed with biological waste (not including small spills/general disinfecting)
- Solvents or volatiles
- Radioactive materials
- Non-absorbed Bleach or any liquids containing bleach (sodium hypochlorite)
- Mixed waste materials (Radiological, Chemical)
- Liquids in sealed containers
- Resin plastics that will melt (e.g., high-density polyethylene (HDPE), low-density polyethylene (LDPE), polyethylene terephthalate (PET), or polyethylene terephthalate glycol-modified (PET-G))
- Animal carcasses/anatomical remains.

What is Regulated Medical Waste?

Regulated Medical Waste is ***a solid waste that is contaminated with an infectious agent known to cause an infectious disease in humans and animals.*** RMW may also be referred to as "**biohazardous**" or "**infectious waste.**" RMW must be properly handled and disposed of to minimize the risk of transmitting infectious agents or endangering human health.

Examples:

- Cultures of microorganisms and biologicals
- Human blood and body fluids, and items contaminated with human blood or body fluids
- Tissues and other anatomical wastes
- Sharps (needles, syringes with attached needles, suture needles, and scalpels)

Mandatory Annual Training

All lab groups who use the B.S.S.F. autoclave facility must annually review and sign the autoclave safety training form prior to submitting waste. Failure to complete the form will result in refusal to treat RMW.

All Regulated Medical Waste generators assume responsibility for assuring the facility operator (B.S.S.F. and their personnel) that no hazardous chemicals, radioactive waste, animal carcasses or human anatomical material, are contained in the red biohazard bags delivered for treatment.

RMW Material Guidelines

Solid Waste in Bags

The waste must be **double bagged** in approved bags and **closed with closures**, such as a twist tie. The bag cannot be closed with a knot or too tightly. Air needs to pass through the opening throughout treatment.

Approved Bags Parameters: (ex. [Fisherbrand Autoclavable Waste Bags](#))

- **Red polypropylene bag** that is **at least 2 mil thick**.
- Must have the **Biohazard label, at least 2" in size**.
- Must have the words **"Potentially Infectious Material" or "Biohazardous"**.
- Must have the words **"Autoclave Bag"**.
- Cannot be more than **2/3 full** or more than **10 lbs**.

Disposable Serological Pipettes

All serological pipettes must be bagged following the guidelines above. Pipettes **cannot** be mixed with other solid waste and need to be organized so that the bags form a **log shape**.

Sharps

Sharps containers are used for items that are RMW and can penetrate the skin. This includes, but is not limited to syringes, scalpels, broken glass, or rigid plastic.

Approved Containers Parameters: (ex. [Fisherbrand Sharps Containers](#))

- Red container with a lid that can be secured.
- Clearly marked with a Biohazard symbol.
- No larger than 14 quarts.

Liquid Waste

Liquid waste can be treated in individual labs by soaking in 10% Bleach (final conc.) for 20 minutes. Afterwards the contents can be dumped down the drain, **except for users in MGB.**

- *Groups in MGB need to allow the bleach to dissipate overnight before dumping.*

Labeling and Transport

RMW

All RMW must be labeled with the Principal Investigator's name, date, building and room number. RMW bags or sharps containers must be transported in a secure leakproof container, which can be an autoclave tray, using a cart.

Sterilization Trays

All materials for autoclaving must be submitted to B.S.S.F. with a sterilization or autoclave tray. The PI's name must be visible on the tray. Examples of a tray can be found here: [ThermoScientific Nalgene Polypropylene Sterilizing Pans](#)

Waste Receiving Schedule

All RMW drop-offs need to be scheduled by appointment at least 24 hours ahead of schedule using the Biological Sciences Support Facility Autoclave Scheduler. The form may be accessed through the QR code:

Upon arriving at the B.S.S.F. laboratory (MGB 207), please be sure to check in with a B.S.S.F. staff member (**not a B.S.S.F. student**) and **never leave your RMW unattended in our hallway or on our rack.**

