



Recycling Guide for Research Facilities

UNSW research facilities generate an estimated 180 tonnes of chemical waste and 80 tonnes of biological waste annually. 70% of the chemical waste go into landfill with only less than 20% being recycled¹. You can help by initiating waste minimisation in your lab starting with the application of the **4Rs: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Recover**.



Before being placed in the recycling bin, materials must be dry and empty, and labels must be defaced or removed. Outer packaging materials that have not entered the laboratory and are clean and uncontaminated can be recycled. If you are not sure if an item has been exposed to a hazardous substance, do not place it in the general waste or recycling bin.



Materials which may have been contaminated with hazardous materials, or used in PC2 facilities, cannot be recycled and must be treated as lab hazardous waste.

RECYCLING DETAILS FOR COMMON LABORATORY PRODUCTS

Glass Bottles

Remove the lid and any labels, rinse the bottle thoroughly, and place it in the Chemical Store Glass Bottle Collection bin.

Plastic Containers

Non-contaminated, clean plastic containers and tubes may be cleaned for reuse or recycled.

Plastic Solvent Bottles

Rinse the bottle thoroughly to remove all traces of solvent and place in the Chemical Store Plastic Solvent Bottle recycling bin.

Polystyrene

Consider reusing uncontaminated cooler boxes which have not entered the lab. Check to see if the vendor has a take-back program.

Cardboard

Cardboard boxes can be flattened and taken to the nearest cardboard recycling bin. Consider reusing clean boxes before disposal to give them a second life.

Wooden Pallets and Boxes

Make an [Archibus Service Request](#) to arrange for a disposal. For large equipment, the supplier may be required to take back materials through their agreement with UNSW.

Further information: Find out where waste facilities are [located on campus](#) and see where our mixed [general waste goes](#). More information about waste and recycling on campus can be [found here](#).

¹ Unpublished UNSW waste audit report 2019-2020