

Purpose

This SOP describes the proper procedure for the collection and disposal of autoclavable waste.

Safety Precautions

1. When unloading the autoclave, wear heat resistant gloves, eye protection, and a lab coat. Stand behind the door until the steam has been released.
2. Do not autoclave materials containing solvents, volatile, or corrosive chemicals such as phenol, chloroform, bleach, etc. or radioactive materials.
3. Needles and syringes, broken glass, slides, and cover slips should be placed in a sharps container. Do not autoclave.

Definition

Autoclavable waste includes:

- All disposable labware
- Gloves and paper towels used for work surface or equipment decontamination
- Cloth containing small, dried blood stains, blood-coated cotton balls
- Culture plates
- Culture media
- Live or attenuated vaccines
- Waste from biological toxins
- Tubing, catheters

Disposal Procedure

1. Place materials in a clear autoclave bag. Do not use a red biohazard bag.
2. Bag should be loosely packed and not more than three-quarters full.
3. Do not seal bag tightly; bag opening should be at least 1 inch in diameter.
4. Place a piece of autoclave indicator tape on the outside of the bag to show that the waste has been processed.
5. Place the bag of waste material in a large, leak-proof tray.
6. Autoclave at 121°C for 60 minutes.
7. After autoclaving is complete, tape the bag shut and place in the regular trash bin located next to the autoclave.