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| University of Pittsburgh Safety Manual | EH&S Guideline Number: 03-015 | |
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GUIDELINES FOR ETHIDIUM BROMIDE DISPOSAL

Although ethidium bromide is not regulated as a hazardous waste, its mutagenic properties may present a human health hazard if it is placed in the trash or poured down the sanitary sewer system. Use the following procedures when disposing ethidium bromide solutions and gels, and ethidium bromide contaminated materials.

1. Ethidium Bromide Solutions

Do not discard ethidium bromide gels or ethidium bromide solutions containing organic solvents or alcohol down the sewer. Only aqueous solutions containing < 10 µg/ml (10 ppm) may be released to the sanitary sewer.

Aqueous solutions containing > 10µg/ml ethidium bromide must be treated (S&S extractor with charcoal filter, or the Green Bag method) prior to sewer disposal; or the solutions must be disposed via the University's Chemical Waste Program. If the material is going to be treated, the solution can be filtered. Once the solution is filtered, pour the filtrate down the drain, place the filter in a sealed plastic bag. **Do not use red bags.** Place a WASTE CHEMICALS label on the sealed bag. The filter and the ethidium bromide should be disposed of through the Chemical Waste Program. Call 4-8952 to schedule a pick up.

2. Gels Containing Ethidium Bromide

Place gels in sturdy plastic bags, then place the bag in a cardboard box. Use an orange Chemical Waste label, identify as "Ethidium Bromide gel", and process through the Chemical Waste Program. Dry gels should also handled in this manner

3. Gloves and Contaminated Debris

Gloves and paper towels that are visibly contaminated with ethidium bromide should be placed in a bag or box. **Do not use red bags.** Label the container with a waste chemical label to identify the material and dispose through the Chemical Waste Program.

4. Glassware

Test tubes contaminated with ethidium bromide should be emptied prior to disposal. Dispose of the liquid according to the above procedures. Contaminated test tubes should be washed with bleach prior to disposal in a broken glass box.

5. Sharps

Sharps and needles contaminated with ethidium bromide should be disposed into sharps containers. An orange CHEMICAL WASTE label must be placed on the sharps container to identify the contents. All sharps containers labeled as chemical waste should be disposed via the University Chemical Waste Program.