Waste Triage Flowchart for Researchers

Does the waste contain any radioactive materials?
Ex: $^{14}$C, $^{51}$C, $^{125}$I, $^{32}$P, $^{33}$P, $^{35}$S, $^{3}$H

YES: Dispose as Radioactive waste. Contact UK Dept. of Radiation Safety for more information. (859-323-6777) http://ehs.uky.edu/radiation/
If the radioactive waste contains biohazardous materials, disinfect the waste first with an approved disinfectant before disposal as radioactive waste.

NO: Submit a request for pick-up through E-trax. Contact the UK Dept. of Environmental Management for more information. (859-323-6280) http://ehs.uky.edu/env/waste_pick-up.php

Does the waste meet EPA Hazardous Waste criteria (characteristic or listed)? Does the waste contain pharmaceutical compounds (i.e., unused portions of certain drugs)? Does the waste present other health or environmental hazards?

YES: Collect sharps in a puncture-resistant, leak-proof sharps container labeled with the universal biohazard symbol. When the container is 2/3 full, arrange for pickup via E-trax (Environmental Management). In Med Science, HSRB, Combs, Whitney Hendrickson, Roach & Gill Heart buildings, housekeeping staff will collect.

NO: At the University of Kentucky, medical waste is not autoclaved and instead is incinerated by a licensed vendor, therefore laboratory disposal of this waste requires special designation by the use of a red bag. Contact Department of Biological Safety (257-1049) for collection procedure specific to your location.

Does the waste contain sharps?
Ex: needles, scalpel blades, razor blades, or microscope coverslips and slides

YES: Collect waste in a leak-proof clear/orange autoclave bag labeled with the universal biohazard symbol. Bags should be set inside a leak-proof, autoclave-proof tray or container for processing and transport to and from the autoclave room. Autoclave waste in spore-tested autoclave designated for biohazard waste at the approved time/temperature. Place cooled autoclaved waste into trash bin lined with black trash bag.

NO: Collect waste in a biohazard-labeled, plastic-lined cardboard box. Place the sealed box in clear/orange autoclave bag and autoclave as described above. Alternatively, adequately disinfect pipets for one hour with freshly diluted disinfectant, drain, and place in plastic-lined broken glass container. Securely tape the box closed when full and housekeeping staff will collect.

Does the waste contain large amounts (>500ml) of infectious human material?
Ex: human blood, human blood products, recognizable human organs, human tissues?

YES: If animals are originally obtained from the Dept. of Laboratory Animal Resources (DLAR), collect waste in a leak proof opaque bag and return to the appropriate location in DLAR. Use a red bag for intentionally infected animals. Place red bags in designated area in DLAR. Otherwise, arrange for pickup via E-trax. (Environmental Management).

NO: Collect waste in a biohazard-labeled, plastic-lined cardboard box. Place the sealed box in clear/orange autoclave bag and autoclave as described above. Collect waste in a cardboard box labeled with “broken glass”. Securely tape the box closed when full and housekeeping staff will collect.

Does the waste contain intact and/or partial animal carcasses?

YES: Collect waste in a leak-proof clear/orange autoclave bag labeled with the universal biohazard symbol. Bags should be set inside a leak-proof, autoclave-proof tray or container for processing and transport to and from the autoclave room. Autoclave waste in spore-tested autoclave designated for biohazard waste at the approved time/temperature. Place cooled autoclaved waste into trash bin lined with black trash bag.

NO: Collect waste in a cardboard box labeled with “broken glass”. Securely tape the box closed when full and housekeeping staff will collect.

Does the waste contain cultures of infectious microorganisms, genetically altered living microorganisms, live or attenuated vaccines, recombinant DNA microorganisms, or other potentially biohazardous materials?

YES: Collect waste in a leak-proof clear/orange autoclave bag labeled with the universal biohazard symbol. Bags should be set inside a leak-proof, autoclave-proof tray or container for processing and transport to and from the autoclave room. Autoclave waste in spore-tested autoclave designated for biohazard waste at the approved time/temperature. Place cooled autoclaved waste into trash bin lined with black trash bag.

NO: Collect waste in a biohazard-labeled, plastic-lined cardboard box. Place the sealed box in clear/orange autoclave bag and autoclave as described above. Alternatively, adequately disinfect pipets for one hour with freshly diluted disinfectant, drain, and place in plastic-lined broken glass container. Securely tape the box closed when full and housekeeping staff will collect.

Disposal in regular trash is permitted.