

# EMPTY CHEMICAL CONTAINERS



The University of Washington follows applicable local, state and national regulations when handling and disposing of chemical containers.

## WHAT IS AN EMPTY CONTAINER?

According to hazardous waste regulations, most chemical containers are "empty" if you have used "normal means," such as inverting, shaking and scraping, to remove the contents from the container.

If the container has a chemical that is "extremely hazardous" (see the Chemical Waste Management section of the [UW Laboratory Safety Manual](#)) or a pesticide:

1. Triple rinse the container, collecting the rinse water into a separate sturdy, compatible screw-top container.
2. Dispose of the rinse water as hazardous waste (see the [Chemical Waste Disposal](#) page of the EH&S website).

## REUSE CONTAINERS

If possible, reuse your empty chemical containers to collect chemical waste for disposal of that same chemical or compatible chemicals.

When reusing a chemical container:

1. Cross out or remove the original label.
2. Place a new [UW Hazardous Waste Label](#) on the container.

You can download hazardous waste labels from the EH&S website. Follow the instructions on the [How to Label Chemical Waste Containers](#) sheet.

## CONTAINER DISPOSAL

If needed, dry the empty container in a well ventilated area.

Use a fume hood (if you have access to one) or find an area away from where people are working.

Deface the container label and place it next to your lab trash, or dispose of it in your building's garbage dumpster.

**Contact EH&S's Environmental Programs team at [hazmat@uw.edu](mailto:hazmat@uw.edu) or 206.685.2849 for more information.**