



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY FACT SHEET: ETHIDIUM BROMIDE WASTE DISPOSAL



EtBr wastes are not regulated by the State of Massachusetts or the EPA. The wastes are prudently managed by laboratory staff and EH&S to minimize human and environmental exposure. Please follow the instructions listed in the following table when handling EtBr:

Waste Stream	Description	Waste Disposal Procedure
Buffer	Typically contain very small concentrations of EtBr (<0.5 mg/L)	Dispose as hazardous waste. Contact EH&S for a waste pick-up.
Stock Solutions	Typically contain higher concentrations of EtBr (1–10 mg/ml)	Dispose as hazardous waste in original container. Contact EH&S for a waste pick-up.
Gels	Typically contain lower concentrations of EtBr (3–5 mg/L)	Allow gels to dry out then place in clear, labeled bags. Dried gels may be bagged with EtBr-contaminated debris. Contact EH&S for a waste pick-up.
Contaminated Debris	Gloves, spill cleanup materials, and other lab supplies contaminated with EtBr	Broken glassware and sharps must be placed in puncture-resistant containers. Other debris may be placed in clear, labeled bags. Contact EH&S for a waste pick-up.
Crystals and Powders	Typically pure or concentrated EtBr	Dispose of EtBr crystals and powders through EH&S. Contact EH&S for a waste pick-up.

Hazardous Waste Pick-up Request: <http://www.umass.cems.sr.unh.edu/CEMS/RequestRemoval>

Do **NOT** dispose of Ethidium Bromide as Biohazardous waste. Keep waste streams separate.

Please note that studies have shown that treatment with hypochlorite does little to diminish the mutagenic properties of Ethidium Bromide.

Spills and Decontamination

1. Use soap and water mixture (detergent solution) or 70% ethanol to wipe clean laboratory work surfaces contaminated with ethidium bromide.
2. Use a UV light to survey work surfaces in the laboratory to ensure that the ethidium bromide has been removed. Wear UV protective glasses when using UV light.

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