



Environmental Safety Division

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Ethidium Bromide Waste Disposal

Ethidium bromide is not regulated by the EPA as hazardous waste. However, UGA manages ethidium bromide using the same methods as hazardous waste due to the mutagenic properties of the substance. Ethidium bromide waste, including gels and stock solutions, should not be poured down the drain or placed in the regular trash. Any ethidium bromide waste should be maintained using hazardous waste procedures and submitted for pickup through Chematix. Occasionally, the ESD Hazardous Materials Program may ask labs to label ethidium bromide waste as **non-hazardous waste**. However, the waste should still be maintained and submitted for pickup using the **same procedures**. Exceptions include the treatment of ethidium bromide buffer solutions and gels using activated carbon.

Ethidium Bromide Gel Management

1. Place in thick plastic bags, buckets (5 gallon paint type buckets with sealable lids), or another suitable disposable plastic container with a secure lid. If using a bucket, please line the bucket with a plastic bag. ESD provides these materials.
2. **Do not** use red biohazard bags; pickup will be refused until contents are transferred to another container. Ensure that containers/bags are not leaking.
3. When creating a waste tag through Chematix for ethidium bromide gels, a percentage of 0.01% may be used for the ethidium bromide portion. The remaining percentage can be reflected by entering agarose gels as the other constituent on the waste tag.

Ethidium Bromide Stock Solutions, Buffer Solutions, or Contaminated Lab Debris

1. These items can be disposed-of using regular Chematix waste labeling and pickup request procedures
2. OR through treatment of the buffer solutions using activated charcoal and then drain disposal. Kits such as the EtBr GreenBag® Disposal Kit can effectively treat buffer solutions and allow for drain disposal of the filtrate. If this method is used, the charcoal or kits must be submitted to Chematix as Hazardous Waste.
3. Contaminated debris can be placed in the same bag or container as gels and submitted to Chematix.

Please contact the ESD Hazardous Materials Program at (706) 542-5801 or hazmat@uga.edu with any questions about the management of Ethidium Bromide Waste.