

Hazardous Waste

For those of you who are not directly involved in the Hazardous Waste Disposal program on the campuses, this is a very basic primer on what that program involves.

Each campus uses certain chemicals and other materials that create hazardous, universal or special wastes that must be disposed of in a responsible manner so that they don't contaminate our environment or threaten our health. Some of the more common items that we're all familiar with include mercury, florescent lights and batteries.



We're prohibited from discarding certain chemicals and waste products in any way we feel like it because of the effect they can have on our environment and our safety. There are many regulations affecting how we can dispose of these items, all the way from the federal level to the state and local levels. Here are a few, but certainly not all, of the regulations, some of which may be familiar to you:

Federal laws under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

- Clean Water Act (CWA)
- Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA, or Superfund)
- The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)

- Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA)
- Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)

California State laws:

- Uniform Controlled Substances Act
- Hazardous Waste Treatment Reform Act of 1995
- Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986

Local San Diego County laws:

- Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA)



The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) enforces California's hazardous waste control laws, issues permits to hazardous waste facilities and mitigates contaminated hazardous waste sites. These activities are funded primarily by fees. Generators of hazardous waste, and each of our campuses qualifies as a generator, are classified based on the amount of waste they generate and there is an annual fee charged based on the classification into which they fall.

We have a Hazardous Materials Business Plan, which addresses the hazardous materials we have on site, emergency contacts, emergency response procedures, emergency equipment and the employee training plan.

San Diego County, through CUPA, has Environmental Health Specialists who regularly inspect our campuses to make sure we are in compliance. In San Diego County, these inspections include hazardous materials handling and the treatment of hazardous wastes and medical wastes. We have some very experienced and knowledgeable people on campus who help keep us in compliance and keep you and your environment clean and safe.