

# SHARPS AND GLASS WASTE SEGREGATION GUIDELINE

The term “sharps” refers to items designed to cut or puncture materials, people, or animals. These include needle assemblies, syringes, scalpels, exacto knife blades and suture blades. Broken glassware is not classified as a sharp even though it can puncture skin and cut materials, people, and animals.

At the University of Waterloo, used glassware is disposed of differently than sharps. This guideline clarifies the requirements for segregating and disposing of the various types of sharps and glassware on campus.

## General Rules for the Handling and Disposal of Sharps

When generating and disposing of sharp-related wastes, follow these guidelines:

- **Never dispose of any type of sharp or broken glassware in a regular garbage or waste receptacle.** This can pose a serious hazard to custodians, other employees, students, and even visitors.
- **Segregate sharps** based on the waste segregation flowchart on page two of this guideline.
- **Recognize** that broken and other glassware (e.g., broken glass, slides, contaminated glass) needs to be handled differently than sharps (e.g., needle assemblies, syringes, razor blades, scalpel blades, and suture blades).
- **Remove** all pourable liquids and solids from the sharps and glassware prior to disposal.
- **Label** all waste sharps containers with “Sharps” on three sides.
- **Ensure** the containers used for sharps are made of puncture-resistant, hard plastic (available at ESF).
- **Take containers to the ESF** when they are ready for final disposal. Containers with residues on the outside will not be accepted.

# Waste Segregation Flowchart

Use the flowchart below to determine how to segregate and dispose of sharps and glass.

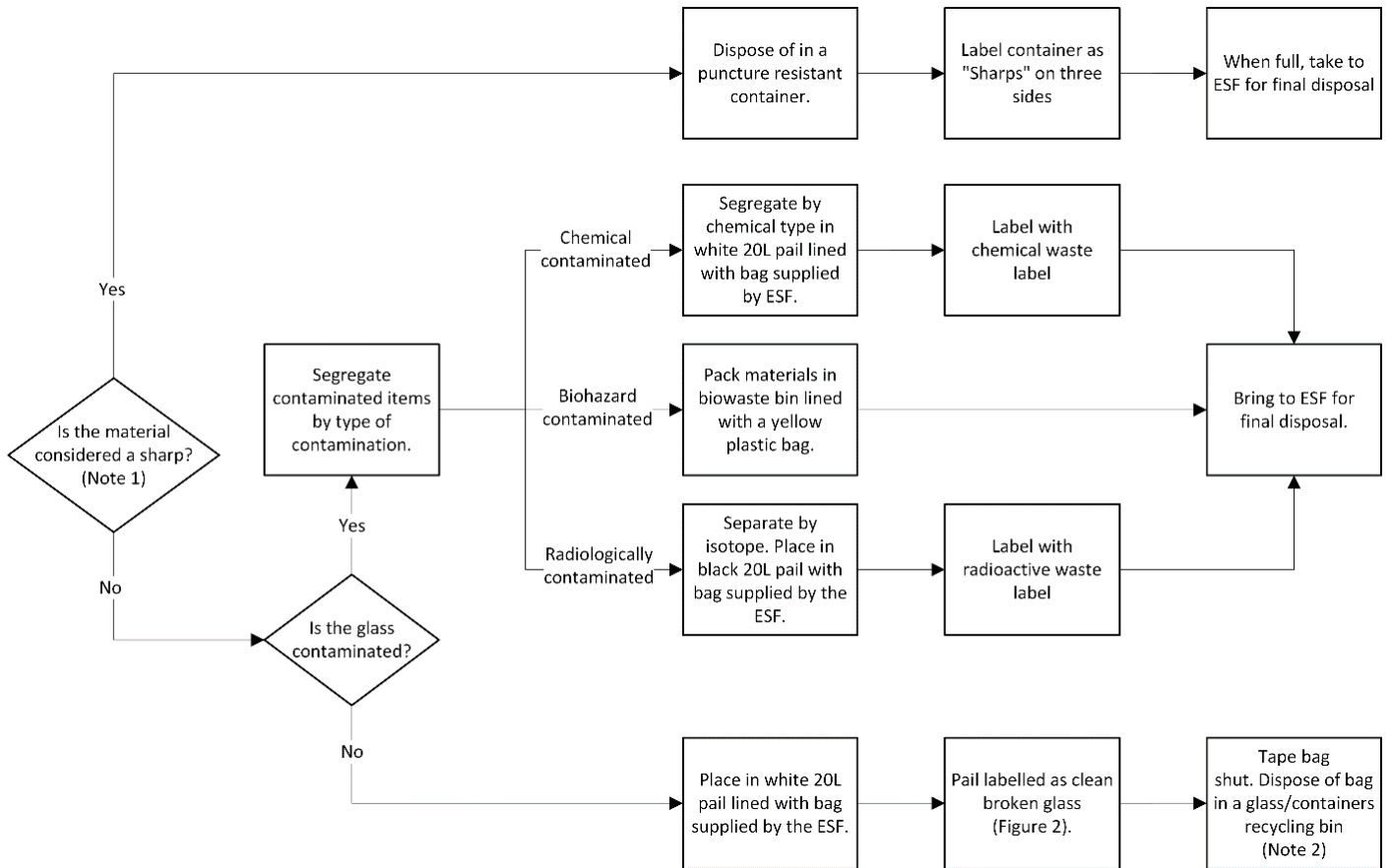


Figure 1: Process for the segregation of sharps, broken glass, and used glassware.

Figure notes:

1. Sharps are defined as items designed to puncture such as needles, scalpels and exacto knife blades.
2. Pails containing glass waste should be sealed and transported to a container recycling location. Once at the container recycling location, remove the bag and dispose of it in the recycling container. Never carry a bag of broken glass to the recycling without the pail as bags can often puncture causing broken glass to leave the bag or cut the individual. See commonly used [container recycling locations](#).



Figure 2: Label for clean broken glass pail supplied by ESF.