

RECYCLING AND WASTE DISPOSAL

General waste



General waste are items that are not recyclable or hazardous, such as:

- styrofoam cups and containers
- pens and pencils
- tissues, napkins and paper towels
- disposable utensils and straws
- food waste
- plastic bags, packaging and wrappers (these, if uncontaminated, can also be recycled through the soft plastic recycling process).
- disposable coffee cups

Use the dark green wheelie bins with a red lid to dispose of these items.

The general waste stream is collected and compacted before being transferred to an engineered landfill site. Engineered landfill sites generate power using the methane created by the decomposing waste.

Glass, cartons and plastic containers (co-mingled waste)



Co-mingled waste includes recyclable materials such as:

- plastic bottles and containers (including yoghurt and takeaway containers)
- glass bottles and jars

- milk and juice cartons
- disposable coffee cup lids (not the cup)
- paper and cardboard (these should preferably be placed into the paper and cardboard stream, where available).

Use the dark green wheelie bins with a yellow lid to dispose of these items.

These are taken off site for segregation at a materials recycling facility. There, they are placed in a sorting line, and each type (plastic bottles, cardboard) is segregated out and then bulked up. Once enough of these items have been collected, they are sent to manufacturers for reprocessing.

Paper waste

Paper waste that can be recycled includes:

- clean or printed paper (no need to remove staples)
- white, coloured and glossy paper
- magazines, newspapers and books
- envelopes (including those with plastic windows).

Not all paper is recyclable. For example, paper towels are not recyclable and must be disposed of as general waste (red-lidded bins).

Place paper waste into the dedicated paper recycling wheelie bins in your building. In office areas, under-desk paper recycling boxes are available for collecting paper waste. If paper recycling wheelie bins are not available, use the co-mingled recycling bins.

Paper waste is collected by our waste contractor and taken to a resource materials recycling facility, where it is screened, decontaminated, sorted and baled. The baled material is then sent to paper processors to be made into recycled paper and cardboard products.

Cardboard



All types of cardboard except waxed or glossy can be recycled. Flatten cardboard waste and place it:

- at the designated collection point in your building for collection
- in the cardboard skip bins located around campus.

Where these are not available, use the co-mingled recycling bins.

Cardboard waste is collected by our waste contractor and taken to a resource materials recycling facility, where it is screened, decontaminated, sorted and baled. The baled material is then sent to paper processors to be made into recycled paper and cardboard products.

Confidential materials



Confidential paper or media material includes:

- business records
- personnel records
- medical or health records
- contracts and tenders
- office files
- archive files
- video tapes, CDs, DVDs and microfiche.

To dispose of:

- paper waste: put it in the secure red wheelie bins with lockable lids
- media material: log a 'waste' request in [ARCHIBUS](#) to arrange collection.

The paper is collected, shredded, baled and transported to a paper-processing facility, where it is manufactured into recycled paper and washroom paper products.

Polystyrene

Expanded polystyrene (EPS) is a lightweight, rigid cellular plastic that is usually white and made of pre-expanded polystyrene beads. It is used in packaging for furniture or electronic goods.

The polystyrene is collected by our waste contractor and taken to a processing company, where it is compressed. The compressed product is then used for synthetic timber, CD and video cassette cases, stationery products, plant pots, coat hangers and more.

Store this material until you have enough to justify a trip, and then log a 'waste' request in [ARCHIBUS](#) to arrange collection. You can also store the material at your allocated loading dock, if applicable.

Biodegradable packing peanuts are not recyclable and must be either composted or put in the general waste bins.

Soft plastic

Soft plastic includes any plastic that can be easily scrunched into a ball, including:

- plastic shopping bags
- shrink wrap or pallet wrap
- packaging such as biscuit packet wrappers, pasta bags, bread or cereal bags.

If paper labels are smaller than an A5 page, these can be left on the packaging. Small amounts of paper won't affect the recycling process. Larger labels should be removed if possible.

Soft plastic is collected by our waste contractor and delivered to a recycling facility, where it is baled, sent to packaging manufacturers and used to manufacture products such as irrigation piping and mobile garbage bins.

Store this material until you have at least enough to fill one shopping bag or box, and then log a 'waste' request in [ARCHIBUS](#) to arrange collection.

Batteries

Use our battery recycling service, rather than disposing of them in a bin. Batteries contain dangerous heavy metals that can contaminate soils and waterways if sent to landfill.

To recycle:

- rechargeable and single-use batteries: send these in a sealed container via internal mail to: University Chemical Store, Cnr Glasshouse Road and Walcott St, St Lucia campus
- large batteries from equipment such as motors and vehicles: email chemwaste@uq.edu.au to request collection.

Batteries are collected by our waste contractor and delivered to a local recycling facility. The recycling facility processes nickel-cadmium batteries, and all other battery types are exported for processing. Materials such as cobalt, lithium, cadmium and nickel are recovered for re-use.

E-waste

E-waste refers to electronic appliances that are no longer functional or are obsolete, such as:

- televisions
- computers
- photocopiers
- printers.

Log a 'waste' request in [ARCHIBUS](#) to arrange collection.

Ensure that:

- all data is erased from equipment,
- toner cartridges are removed from printers.

E-waste is collected by our waste contractor and delivered to a local recycling facility, where it is disassembled into individual components:

- recovered glass, mixed plastic and most metals are sent to manufacturing companies in Australia for processing
- glass from CRT monitors is converted to glass fibre for insulation
- mixed plastic is turned into posts and pallets
- metals are recovered for re-use in Australia
- circuit boards are processed in Korea, where the gold and silver is recovered for re-use.

Mobile phones

Mobile phone waste includes all types of:

- mobile phones
- phone batteries

- chargers and accessories
- wireless internet devices
- smart watches.

Send mobile phone handsets, batteries and accessories to the mail room. They are then collected for free by national mobile phone industry recycling program.

Old mobile phones are collected and transported to a Brisbane recycling facility where they are disassembled into individual components. The recovered glass, mixed plastic and most metals are sent to manufacturing companies in Australia for processing.

Fluorescent tubes and lamps

UQ is a member of the national [Fluorocycle](#) program. Because mercury can contaminate the groundwater and soil when sent to landfill, we recycle all tubes and lamps that contain mercury, including:

- fluorescent tubes
- high intensity discharge (HID) lamps
- small compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs).

Fluorescent tubes and lamps are collected by our waste contractor and delivered to a local recycling facility, where the tubes and globes are crushed. The crushed material is then sorted into individual components for resource recovery:

- when mercury-filled phosphor powder is heated, the mercury turns into a vapour which is then condensed to produce pure metal
- aluminium from the tube ends is separated and then re-used in the manufacturing of new products
- phosphor powder is used to manufacture fertiliser products for the agriculture industry
- glass is separated and recycled into glass wool for home insulation.

Furniture and office supplies

Unwanted furniture, equipment and supplies can be listed on [WARPit](#), an online tool that allows UQ staff to swap resources internally. If these items are not claimed, they are donated to local charities.

Items posted on WARPit can include:

- furniture
- unused stationery
- office supplies or equipment
- printer consumables
- lab equipment.

Broken items that can't be re-used should be transferred to the council recycling depot using the [UQ removal contractor](#).

Toner and inkjet cartridges

To recycle empty cartridges, send them in a sealed container via internal mail to Property and Facilities Central Store, Glasshouse Road, St Lucia campus.

UQ's used toner and inkjet cartridges are collected by a local recycling company. The cartridges are re-manufactured using the plastic casings of the empty cartridges. Any casings that are not suitable

for re-use are then broken down to material type (such as plastic and metal) and recycled to base materials.

Make sure you purchase re-manufactured cartridges for use in your printers.

Organic waste

Organic waste at the Gatton campus is collected and delivered to an organic resource recovery facility for processing, where the waste is converted into compost, soil conditioner and mulch products.

Animal, chemical, clinical, cytotoxic and radioactive waste

Animal waste is collected by our waste contractor and taken to a resource recovery centre. From there, it is transferred to an engineered landfill site. The engineered landfill sites generate power using the methane created by the decomposing waste.

Chemical waste is collected by Toxfree and transported to their Narangba facility for processing.

Clinical and cytotoxic waste is collected by Ace Waste and incinerated at the Ace Waste Incineration Facility at Willawong, Brisbane.

Radioactive wastes should be managed by your organisational unit's Radiation Safety Officer, in liaison with Queensland Health.

Log a 'waste' request in [ARCHIBUS](#) for:

- waste that may require specialised processing
- advice on how to appropriately dispose a particular waste item.

See the Waste Management section of the [Environmental Management System](#) for more information on how we collect, store and dispose of these types of waste.

Other waste initiatives at UQ

- [Recycling and waste minimisation](#)