

Heron Island Research Station (HIRS)

Biological Waste

1. Scope

This policy applies to following wastes that has been used for research, demonstration, educative, instructive, operational or in any other, non-consumptive way, associated with The University of Queensland's Heron Island Research Station:

- Animal carcasses and parts thereof that are not classified as Clinical and Related (Path) waste or Cytotoxic Drugs and Related waste
- Used animal litter and foodstuff; and
- Faeces.

This policy **excludes** the following:

- Any of the above 'biological waste' that is in anyway infectious or contaminated;
- Clinical And Related Waste;
- Cytotoxic Drugs and Related Waste; and
- Cadavers.

2. Objectives

- Ensure that the biological waste generated is disposed of in an environmentally sound manner;
- Protect human health and the environment from the effects of potentially infectious wastes; and
- To comply with environmental legislation and waste treatment and disposal regulations.

3. Procedure

The preferable method for disposal of biological waste is incineration or composting. Due to the location of the Heron Island Research Station the transport to the University's incinerator is not feasible and composting is not a favourable activity because of the proximity of the local community.

For infectious or contaminated material, the wastes shall be disposed of as the waste it is contaminated with (i.e. clinical and related, chemical or radioactive. Refer to the appropriate procedures in the EMS Manual). Otherwise, the following measure shall be taken for disposal of the wastes.

3.1 Collection

- All biological waste will be placed and sealed in a plastic bag. The plastic bag may be of any type, but shall not be coloured red, yellow or purple (as these indicate waste of a hazardous nature). A plastic shopping bag is sufficient. To minimise the use of bags, as much biological waste as possible should be placed in the same bag from any given laboratory work.

- The bag shall be placed into a closable container marked as “**Biological Waste**” within a freezer. The container is not to be overfilled such that it cannot be closed and must be in sound condition with no splits or cracks. The container shall not be placed in a freezer used for storage of food products or other materials for human consumption and should be isolated from all other contents as best as possible.
- Once the container is full, or once it has been held for more than 2 weeks, on the morning of the next General Waste Collection (refer to the General Waste Procedure – section 9F in the EMS Manual), the contents of the container are to be transferred to the general waste bin.
- The container and any other equipment that may have been used to transfer the waste shall be disinfected immediately after transferring the waste.

3.2 Transporters of Biological Waste

Biological waste must be transported to HIRS by researchers and/or university staff if it is being generated away from the site. If this is required, the following must be adhered to:

- The waste shall be transported directly to HIRS from the source of generation;
- If the travel time to HIRS is less than 4 hours, the waste shall be kept in sealed plastic bags; and
- If the travel time from HIRS exceeds 4 hours, the waste shall be kept chilled.

Biological waste can only be taken from site for final disposal by a licensed general waste contractor. Unless otherwise arranged by the manager HIRS, the waste contractor shall be that contracted by the Calliope Shire Council.

3.3 Spills

Every person generating and/or transporting biological wastes shall have equipment to carry out clean up of spills. HIRS will have an appropriate spill kit at the research station for use on site by users of the facility. Those working with the waste external to HIRS must carry this equipment with them. This will include all measures for containing, removing and disinfecting a spill area.

4. Waste Process Responsibilities

Responsibility	Action	Contact
Students, Researchers, Lecturers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Segregate the Biological wastes from other wastes to avoid contamination; • Dispose of the wastes in the facilities provided allocated for Biological wastes only; and • Follow and be aware of the procedures set out in this operating procedure. 	Not applicable
Supervisors and HIRS Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that students and staff are aware of the operating procedure for Biological wastes; • Provide adequate environmental management training; • Review the waste management program as is necessary; and • Provide infrastructure for the disposal of biological waste 	Consult phone directory as appropriate (HIRS: (4978 1399)
JJ Richards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide waste collection service (general waste). 	(07) 4972 9399

5. Enquiries

Any enquiries regarding the management of the Biological waste stream shall be addressed to the HIRS Manager on Ph: 4978 1399.

6. Definitions

6.1 Waste

Under section 13 of the *Environmental Protection Act, 1994* **waste** is defined as “any gas, liquid, solid or energy (or a combination of wastes) that is surplus to, or unwanted from, any industrial, commercial, domestic or other activity, whether or not of value.”

6.2 Biological Waste

Biological Wastes refers to waste of a biological nature, which has the potential to cause harm by acting as pathological waste, while under going decomposition. To eliminate infection and contamination, biological wastes are effectively treated using incineration.

6.3 Animal Carcasses

Animal carcasses refers to the carcasses of domestic and laboratory animals including parts thereof that are not classified as Clinical and Related (Path) waste or Cytotoxic Drugs and Related waste.

6.4 Carcass Limbs

Any limb which has been removed from the carcass.

6.5 Used Animal Litter and Foodstuffs

Animal litter and foodstuffs refers to left over or contaminated foodstuffs, sawdust from cages and all animal litter.

6.6 Faeces

Any faeces accumulated or faecal specimens used for testing.

7. References

- Environmental Protection Act 1994
- Health Act 1937
- Environmental Protection (Waste Management) Policy and Regulation 2000
- Draft Waste Management Strategy for Queensland
- Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995
- Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995 and Regulations