

Heron Island Research Station (HIRS) Waste Management Program

1. Scope

This operational procedure is limited to the waste streams at the Heron Island Research Station (HIRS).

2. Objectives

The waste streams at The University of Queensland Heron Island Research Station will be managed in order to comply with environmental, health and safety regulations and to ensure waste reduction through the application of waste minimisation principles. The wastes will be managed in such a way as to:

- Avoid risk to health and safety;
- To ensure the Research Station grounds are aesthetically pleasing;
- To avoid the incidence of littering;
- To enhance waste minimisation through recycling;
- To ensure the waste is disposed of in an environmentally sound manner;
- To ensure the segregation of wastes to minimise the volumes of waste going to landfill; and
- To prevent the bird population from accessing wastes.

3. Waste Process Responsibilities

3.1 *Operator Responsibilities*

At the Research Station, the different categories of waste come under the responsibility of the following:

Table 4.2.1. Waste Operators' Responsibilities

Responsibility	Waste
Lab Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chemical Waste • Clinical and Related Waste • Biological Waste
Maintenance Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Waste • Food • Recyclables • Cardboard • Aluminium

It is the operators' responsibility to ensure that all other responsibilities are fulfilled. It is also the operators' responsibility to ensure all staff involved in the handling of wastes are aware of and follow the Operators' Procedure.

3.2 General Waste Handling Responsibilities

For each of the waste streams at the Research Station, the following responsibilities must be observed by the operators:

- Supply a waste management system for all staff and visitors to the Research Station;
- Supply bins and/or collection receptacles for staff and visitors to the Research Station;
- Collect all wastes from the collection receptacles;
- Store and handle the wastes developed at the Research Station including the removal of the wastes from Heron Island;
- To ensure that contractual agreements exist for the supply of collection containers, the collection of wastes on the mainland and proper disposal of wastes; and
- To ensure that all contractors used are licensed for the handling of the respective wastes.

3.3 General Handling of Wastes

When handling any waste, all appropriate safety precautions should be taken:

- Gloves appropriate for the wastes being handled will be used at all times (e.g. gardening gloves for general waste, cardboards, etc and chemical gloves for chemicals);
- Eye wear should be used for the handling of chemical and pathological wastes;
- Any disposable protective equipment used during the handling of pathological waste must be disposed of as pathological waste; and
- Any waste transfer operations shall be performed in an area that allows easy containment of spilled waste and equipment to deal with spills shall be easily accessible.

3.4 General Maintenance

All receptacles should have lids or at least be capable of being sealed from the environment.

All bins/drums/bails/bags used for the collection of waste at the Research Station should be of a suitable construction and condition to contain the wastes held in them. Any damaged or broken receptacles should not be used.

All wheelie bins are washed weekly or more frequently if the necessity arises. Any washing of waste receptacles will be performed on the wash down slab in accordance with the Users' Operating Procedure. Appropriate personal safety precautions should be taken including the use of gloves and eye protection when cleaning bins.

4. Procedures for Handling Wastes

The procedures for handling of wastes generated at the Research Station are outlined in Operator's Waste Disposal Table. Please refer to specific procedures for Chemicals, Clinical and Related Wastes, Radioactive Wastes, General Waste and Recycling.

5. Waste Process Responsibilities

5.1 Waste Generators

Chemical Waste Generators include students, laboratory technicians, researchers and lecturers. It is the responsibility of the chemical waste generators to observe the following:

- To segregate all hazardous wastes from non hazardous wastes to avoid contamination. For example, don't mix general waste with hazardous waste and don't mix hazardous waste with chemical waste.
- To dispose of waste in appropriate bins and containers located at the Research Station.
- To store all wastes in the appropriate locations and in a secure manner.
- Avoid keeping unsecured wastes in areas accessible to bird life; and
- Avoid keeping wastes in inappropriate locations that cause contamination of soils during breakage or spillage.

WARNING

**Disposal of any wastes on the island is strictly prohibited.
Offenders may be prosecuted under the Environmental Protection Act (1994) and other applicable Queensland legislation.**

6. Waste Disposal Table

The Waste Disposal table details the procedures for dealing with waste streams, together with appropriate contacts for additional information.

7. References

- Environmental Protection Act, 1994
- Environmental Protection (Waste Management) Regulation 2000
- AS/NZS 3816:1998 Management of Clinical and Related Wastes
- Draft Waste Management Strategy for Queensland
- The Health Act (1937 with Amendments)
- Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995 and Regulations