NITRIC ACID INCIDENT

There have now been THREE incidents involving expired nitric acid. In one instance, a researcher picked up the plastic bottle of nitric acid from a fume hood when the handle broke off in their hand. The bottle fell to the floor, splashing some acid onto the researcher’s leg. In the two other incidents, the handle fell off the container when the researcher attempted to move the bottle, resulting in an acid spill onto the floor.

In all three cases, the container was past its expiration date by about two years. Regularly inspect chemical containers for proper condition and expiration dates. Promptly submit for disposal any chemicals that are past their expiration dates. A detailed notice about nitric acid containers is available on the EHS website.

PROPER SHARPS DISPOSAL

Reminder to everyone who works with sharps (needles, razor blades, etc.)!! These items should only be disposed of in a sharps container. There have been instances of sharps being thrown into regular trash cans. This can cause an injury and exposure to custodial staff. Do not throw sharps into trash cans: only throw them into proper sharps containers.

CHEMICALLY VS BIOLOGICALLY CONTAMINATED BROKEN GLASS

We have received questions regarding disposal of broken glass. Here is an easy breakdown of how to properly dispose of broken glass.

- Broken glassware that was not being used or contaminated by chemicals or biological material – Goes into the broken glass boxes provided by Custodial Services.
- Broken glassware that contained hazardous chemicals – goes in its own solid waste container and is immediately tagged as a chemical waste and a request for pick up is submitted through EMS.
- Broken glassware that was being used with biological material – goes in a sharps container and is submitted for pick up as a biological waste.

If you do not have an available empty sharps container for chemically contaminated glass waste, contact EHS.

UT HERD AND ELECTRONIC WASTE DISPOSAL SYSTEM (EMS)

EHS is pleased to announce the launch of two new web-based applications. UT Hazard Evaluation and Risk Database (UT HERD) has replaced EHS Assistant. The new database is easier to navigate and has a more user-friendly interface.

Environmental Management Systems (EMS) moves the submission of chemical waste requests to an online process and allows users to check on the status of submitted requests. See our webpage for more details. We welcome any feedback.