

On-Line Radioactive Waste Pick-Up Requests

The Office for Research Safety (ORS) and the Office for Research Information Systems has developed a module in ISIS that allows for on-line pick-up requests for radioactive waste collected in the laboratory. When the new module is rolled out on October 5, 2009, we will no longer accept pick-up requests by phone, walk-in or email.

To request a radioactive waste pick-up in the new system, log into ISIS with your net ID and password. In the User Tools menu, select Hazardous Waste Pick Up Requests to start a wizard that helps to build the request. The wizard allows you to request both radioactive and hazardous chemical waste at the same time. For radioactive waste (including uranium or thorium waste) click the radio button for that waste stream and, if want to prevent anyone else from adding to your request, check the box to make the request private. Then click Next Screen to continue through the wizard.

The next set of screens is designed to provide the same information you have been putting on the waste cards up to now. Waste cards will no longer be required under the new system. First you are asked to specify the room and type of waste you want picked up. ISIS will only allow you to select the rooms and nuclides for which your supervising investigator is authorized. Another optional field allows you to specify where the full container is located within the room.

For aqueous waste, we ask for the radionuclide, activity (in mCi), container size, and pH level. Although the wizard (and University policy) allows you to specify more than one radionuclide for single liquid waste container, we encourage you to restrict each waste container to a single radionuclide. That makes it much easier for ORS to verify that no liquid effluent limit is exceeded.

The screen for dry waste only asks for the radionuclide, activity (in mCi) and container size. University policy prohibits more than one radionuclide in a single dry waste container. Pick-up requests for liquid scintillation vials allow you to request pick up of more than one container with the same request. This also requires a separate request for each radionuclide.

Two other waste types are available to choose from. Biological waste in this context is only concerned with experimental animals or their bedding containing radioactive materials. ORS still requires all carcasses to be frozen before we pick them up from the lab. We will usually wait until a shipment is scheduled before we pick up the frozen carcasses.

Organic liquid radioactive waste is what we call mixed hazard waste and the generation of this waste should only be a last resort and must only be generated after a discussion with ORS. Disposal costs for mixed waste can be tremendously high so the lab that generates this waste without first notifying ORS may be required to pay for the disposal. This was discussed in a recent Research Safety Newsletter.

After you have entered the details for each of the radioactive waste containers and you are ready for us to pick them up, you must submit the request to ORS. On the summary page that shows all of the pending requests, click the button labeled Proceed to Submission Page. On the submission page, click the button labeled Submit to ORS to place your request in the queue for pick up. We try to replace the full container with an empty one with one day of the request, two at the most.

You will be able to view your submitted waste pick-up requests in ISIS for one week after you submit it. We are developing a series of reports for this module, so if there is a specific set of data that you would like to view, please let us know and we'll try to accommodate your request.

Use this *NU*trino as a training tool for new workers and refresher training for current workers. Circulate it among the radiation workers in your group and have them sign and date the training form on the back. File it with your authorization and other radiation safety documents for review during regulatory inspections. Discuss it during laboratory meetings. You can find back issues at <http://www.research.northwestern.edu/research/ors/rad/nutrino/>.