

**SUNY GENESEO
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY**

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| Program No.: EHS 003 | Approved by: Chuck Reyes |
| Title: Waste Aerosol Can Handling | Date: 8/11/2023 |
| Revision No.: New | Page 1 of 3 |
| Prepared by: Frank Blasioli | |

I. PURPOSE:

This plan establishes a standardized way to handle and dispose of waste aerosol cans generated on campus. It is illegal to dispose of any aerosol cans in the regular trash.

II. AFFECTED PERSONNEL:

Staff from all departments that utilize and, therefore, require disposal of aerosol cans are the primary generators, and must properly dispose of waste aerosol cans via EHS.

III. ACCUMULATION TIME:

Accumulation time, once in accumulation area, must not to exceed one year.

IV. HAZARDS:

Aerosol cans are dangerous because of the **pressure inside the metal canister**. Even if the active ingredient is not a hazardous chemical (e.g., food products), the can is still capable of exploding or turning into a dangerous projectile. **Most aerosol cans use hydrocarbons, such as propane, butane, or LPG gas as the propellant**. Hence, many waste aerosol cans that are not empty are ignitable hazardous wastes.

V. WHAT IS AN “EMPTY” AEROSOL CAN?

If an aerosol can is “empty” (i.e., **all the liquid contents have been removed by spraying**), the can may still contain hazardous propellant that remains reactive. It is a hazardous waste and must be managed as such. Aerosol cans are considered empty if **no more than 3% of the original net weight of the can or not more than 1 inch (in.) of the liquid residue remains in the can**. Tips for “empty” aerosol cans include shake the can up and down.

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VI. AERSOL CAN HANDLING:

SUNY Geneseo is a Small Quantity Handler (accumulate 5000 kg or less of universal waste at any time) and must:

1. Keep and accumulate empty in cans in a sealed container.
2. Label the aerosol cans with stickers provided by EHS that state: "Waste Aerosol Can(s)". It is acceptable to have one container, (e.g., bag) to be labeled and not all individual cans within the bag.
3. Clean up leaking, spilled, or broken aerosol cans and place it in a suitable separate (contaminate) container.
4. All employees who handle or manage aerosol cans must be informed of handling and emergency procedures.

VII. WHAT TO DO AS A SMALL OR LARGE QUANTITY HANDLER OF UNIVERSAL WASTE AEROSOL CANS:

Containers of cans should be brought to the garage in Clark B. The garage personnel are trained to do the following:

1. Sort aerosol cans from gas bottles, as disposal procedures differ.
2. Remove plastic actuators (tip/nozzle) to reduce the risk of accidental release.
3. Puncture and drain the cans.

When an aerosol can is punctured and recycled, the garage personnel must establish and follow the written procedure:

- A. Wear proper PPE—safety glasses and/or face shield, nitrile gloves.
- B. Insert top of can facing downward into the aerosol can puncture tool.
- C. Put cap onto tool and tighten to securely fasten.
- D. Take tool handle and push down aggressively.
- E. Leave handle fully depressed, slowly releasing contents out of can.
- F. Loosen cap nut.
- G. Remove cap.
- H. Throw empty can in standard metal waste dumpster.

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The Procedure for emptying gas (LPG or other) bottles:

- A. Determine if the bottle is empty.
- B. Screw bottle into Schrader (Pro Solv) valve removal fixture.
- C. Read gauge to make sure bottle is empty, and the needle reads in the green portion of the gauge.
- D. The bottle can be removed and placed into the standard metal waste dumpster.

Aerosol cans that show evidence of leaking must also be punctured, and any remaining contents should be drained. Once removed from the aerosol cans, the contents must be assessed to determine if they are hazardous waste. If contents are determined to be hazardous waste, they must be managed under the normal hazardous waste disposal regulations listed in Section IX below. Clean Air Act regulations would also apply for the management of the aerosol cans.

VIII. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND CLEAN UP EQUIPMENT:

- Nitrile gloves.
- Safety glasses and/or face shield.
- Absorbent material such as spill pads or pigs in case of a spill/discharge.
- Clean towels and mops.

IX. CLEAN UP PROCEDURE IN EVENT OF A SPILL:

Contain the spill in the smallest area possible. Cordon off the area with caution tape and cones to prevent unauthorized entry (if necessary!). Use absorbent to soak up the spillage. Place absorbent in sealed container. Label as "Hazardous Waste" if determined to be so. Plan with EHS to have it removed and sent to the hazardous waste central storage building. If it is not determined to be hazardous waste, the used absorbent may be disposed of in ordinary trash. If more staff assistance is needed, make the call to your supervisor or Facilities Services. If possible, prevent the spill entering the **storm drain**. (Different from floor or sanitary drain).

X. EXPOSURE AND FIRST AID

If you believe that aerosol contents have come into direct contact with your eyes, nose, mouth, or a cut, abrasion, puncture, etc., immediately and thoroughly wash the exposed area with copious amounts of soap and water and seek medical care. Read and follow SDS instructions. Supervisors will need to complete an accident report.