

What a waste

A significant cost for schools and colleges can be the disposal of waste material, both equipment and chemicals. Here, as in so many other areas, SSERC can help.

Electrical and other equipment

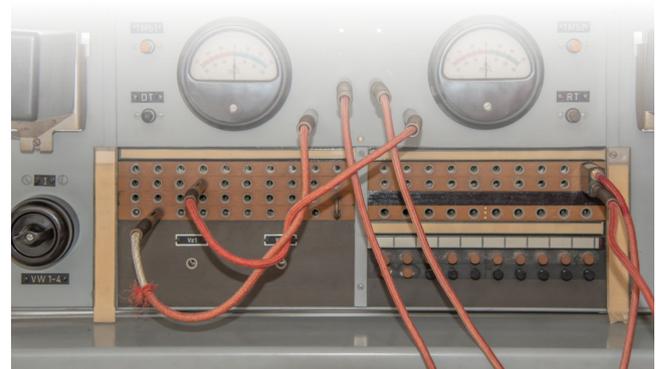
The disposal of electrical equipment is covered by the WEEE (The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) regulations. However, not all items that use electricity are covered by the regulations. SSERC can advise on what you need to do to dispose of such equipment.

An additional problem with old items such as ovens is the (remote) possibility that there might be asbestos in their construction. SSERC can help by finding out if this is indeed the case and advising on what to do if there is.

Human remains

The human skeleton standing in the corner is almost a cliché in biology laboratories. For many years, these have been made of plastic but there are still a few older ones, or more likely individual bones such as skulls, that are actual human remains. With the advent of the Human Tissue Act in 2004, it was not permissible to just put these in the bin.

Contact SSERC and we can offer advice on how to sensitively dispose of these items.



Other Biological specimens and materials

The hazards of preserved biological specimens will depend on what is the liquid they have been stored in. In some cases, these can just be bagged up and put in the bin but in others they will need to be kept for professional uplift.

Fresh materials, such as items for dissection, have no such problems.

The other biological disposal issue is that relating to microbiological materials such as plates and cultures. There are specific treatments that may apply before these can be placed in the bin – SSERC can advise on what is appropriate. >>



Chemicals

The biggest issue, however, is the disposal of chemicals. The items mentioned above can either not be disposed of or will happen rarely. Chemicals are used on a daily basis and thus waste will inevitably be generated. Some of this waste can only be disposed of by professional, licensed contractors.

SSERC can help here in several ways:

- 1) We have a list of disposal companies that we can share for you to get quotes from to get the best deal.
- 2) We can advise on how to substitute chemicals used in experiments for ones that are not environmental toxins and which can therefore be disposed of more easily.
- 3) We can advise on methods such as microscale chemistry that reduce the quantities used to such a low level that disposal does not become an issue.
- 4) We can advise on methods to treat some chemical waste in-house so that they do not need a chemical uplift.
- 5) We can explain the real meaning of the dates on chemicals so that schools do not find themselves having to dispose of perfectly useable chemicals with the cost both of disposal and of replacement.
- 6) In these matters, as in many others, SSERC can offer professional advice to help reduce costs within the school or Local Authority.



Just one more way in which your **SSERC membership** can save you money! <<



SSERC, 1-3 Pitreavie Court, South Pitreavie Business Park, Dunfermline KY11 8UU.
Telephone 01383 626070, enquiries@sserc.scot, www.sserc.scot

SSERC is a Company Limited by Guarantee (Scottish Company No. SC131509) and a registered educational charity (Scottish Charity No. SC017884) Registered Office - 5th Floor, Quartermile Two, 2 Lister Square, Edinburgh EH3 9GL.