



The University of British Columbia  
Health, Safety and Environment

**MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** May 16, 2003

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**To:** Andre Mackenzie  
**Director of Planning  
Construction and Space  
Utilization**

**Cc:** Charles Ramey, Pathology

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**Re: Hazardous Waste Freezer Clean Out**

The hazardous waste freezer in Waste Storage Room at the Acute Care Unit (UBC Hospital) has been identified as it needs to be defrosted, disinfected, and cleaned out. This freezer is shared unit with the following Faculty of Medicine Departments:

- Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine
- Department of Psychiatry
- Brain Research Centre

Please ensure that this freezer is cleaned out before **June 20, 2003**. See next page of this memo for a current picture of the status of your freezer and procedures for defrosting freezers.

The freezer must be defrosted/disinfected/cleaned out to ensure proper protection of Environmental Programs staff when providing the services of picking up biological or hazardous wastes from your department. The rime build up may result in the exposure to laboratory personnel who open freezer doors. In addition, the build up can cause freezers to run inefficiently (i.e., improper airflow).

In addition to the hazardous waste freezer, may be other departmental freezers in laboratories that may also require defrosting/cleaning. Please ensure that your department personnel clean out their freezers periodically (once every two years). When cleaning out freezers, departments may want to dispose of hazardous materials through the Environmental Services Facility. Follow the procedures located in the Hazardous Wastes Disposal Manual or the HSE web page (<http://www.hse.ubc.ca>). For further information regarding disposal of laboratory waste, contact Ron Aamodt (604-822-6306) or Bang Dang (604-822-1285).

If you have any questions regarding this memo, please contact Stephen Lee, Environmental Programs Officer, at 604-822-9280.

## *How to defrost your freezer:*

- 1) Find an alternative freezer to store the contents (ask permission from owner or another laboratory).
- 2) Place chemicals/specimens in a box, and inventory.
- 3) Discard any unwanted materials through the Environmental Services Facility as per the Waste Disposal Procedures.
- 4) Ensure that the freezer and/or refrigerator are empty of contents.
- 5) Either unplug electrical wall outlet or turn freezer off.
- 6) Ensure that liquids from the melting frost are contained within the freezer or else use paper towels.
- 7) If freezer is used to store biological materials, use a bleach solution to disinfect and wipe down.
- 8) Wipe down inside of the freezer. Soak up all liquids.
- 9) Turn on freezer. Wait until the freezer is fully functioning before returning contents.

For further information, contact Stephen Lee (822-9280).



Picture of the pathological waste freezer located in the Waste Room at the Acute Care Unit (UBC Hospital).  
Faculty of Medicine shared freezer