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Ethylene glycol disposal

Posted by Anonymous on Fri, 2017-11-17 13:57

Ethylene glycol disposal: I have small quantities, (less than 50mL of each) of 20%, 30% & 50% ethylene glycol solutions and would like to know the best way to dispose of them?

Authored 2017-07-20

Voting:



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Year Level:

7
8
9
10

Senior Secondary

Laboratory Technicians:

Laboratory Technicians

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Ethylene Glycol disposal

Submitted by sat on 20 November 2017

Answer reviewed 26 February 2023

We are aware that you have very small quantities of ethylene glycol solutions. If you are likely to repeat the activity and if the solutions are not contaminated, then you could suitably label and keep the solutions for the next time you conduct the activity.

Ethylene glycol is a scheduled poison and is classified as toxic.¹ Although the threat it poses to aquatic organisms is low,² water authorities we contacted^{3,4} do not recommend that it be disposed of down the sink. One authority⁴ advises that the substance has a high biological/chemical oxygen demand and can therefore potentially affect waste water treatment processes.⁴ Ethylene glycol has household and industrial applications as an antifreeze/coolant; manufacturers of the substance recommend that with respect to disposal, it is considered hazardous waste.^{5,6}

Some options for disposal are:

- reuse as antifreeze;
- deposit it at a recycling collection point or alternatively, at a nearby automotive workshop which has the capacity to recycle it.
- contacting local waste facilities or the environmental protection agency for your state/territory.⁷

In the absence of these options, the ethylene glycol solution can be transferred to a labelled container and stored for collection by a licenced chemical waste disposal contractor.⁸

References

¹ ChemSupply Australia website, (2023), *Safety Data Sheet: Ethanediol*. Please search the product information page on the website for the current SDS for Ethanediol <https://shop.chemsupply.com.au/>

² Concise International Chemical Assessment Document 22 ETHYLENE GLYCOL: Environmental aspects http://www.inchem.org/documents/cicads/cicads/cicad_22.htm#PartNumber:1

³ TasWater. 2017. Personal communication.

⁴ SA Water. 2017. Personal Communication.

⁵ Department of the Environment and Blue Environment Pty Ltd. 2015. *Hazardous Waste in Australia*, Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy website, [Hazardous waste profile 2010-11 - DCCEEW](https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/protection/waste/publications/nati...) (Accessed February 2023)

⁶ 'Hazardous waste', Better Health Channel website, <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/hazardous-waste...> (August 2014)

⁷ 'Waste', NSW EPA Website. Waste (nsw.gov.au) (Accessed February 2023)

⁸ Science ASSIST. 2017. *Science ASSIST Chemical Management Handbook*, Science ASSIST website, <https://assist.asta.edu.au/resource/4193/chemical-management-handbook-au...>

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