Waste Management and Hazardous Materials Disposal Policy

2026

The Maldives National University

Policy Number	
Policy Name	Waste Management and Hazardous Materials Disposal Policy
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Policy Approval Meeting	MNU Sustainability Committee
Policy Effective Date	Upon approval, subject to implementation schedule
Review Cycle	Every three years
Policy Owner	MNU Administration

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a systematic, safe, and environmentally responsible approach to waste management across The Maldives National University (MNU) campuses. The policy aims to minimise waste generation, promote waste segregation, reuse and recycling, ensure the safe handling and disposal of hazardous materials, and prevent environmental pollution and risks to human health.

This policy supports MNU's commitment to environmental sustainability, occupational health and safety, and responsible resource management, taking into consideration the environmental vulnerabilities of the Maldives as a small island developing state.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all MNU campuses, faculties, centres, administrative offices, laboratories, workshops, libraries, cafeterias, and other university-managed facilities.

It applies to all staff, students, researchers, contractors, service providers, and visitors involved in activities that generate, handle, store, transport, or dispose of waste within university premises.

3. Policy Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

3.1. Reduce waste generation through sustainable consumption and responsible resource management.

3.2. Establish appropriate waste segregation, collection, storage, and disposal practices across MNU campuses.

3.3. Ensure hazardous materials are identified, handled, stored, and disposed of safely.

3.4. Promote reuse, recycling, and resource recovery wherever feasible.

3.5. Prevent environmental contamination and minimise health and safety risks associated with waste.

3.6. Strengthen environmental awareness and accountability among university staff, students, and service providers.

4. Waste Classification

Waste generated within MNU campuses shall be classified into the following categories:

4.1. General Waste: General waste, including food packaging, contaminated non-recyclable materials and other general refuse, shall be collected separately and disposed of through approved waste management services.

4.2. Recyclable Waste: Recyclable materials, including paper, cardboard, plastic bottles and metal cans, shall be segregated at the point of generation, collected separately and transferred to authorised recycling facilities where available.

4.3. Organic Waste: Organic waste, including food scraps, fallen leaves and garden waste, shall be managed through composting or other appropriate organic waste treatment methods wherever feasible to promote sustainable resource use and minimise waste disposal.

4.4. Electronic Waste (E-Waste): Electronic waste, including obsolete computers, printers, cables and other electronic equipment, shall be collected and stored separately from general waste and transferred to authorised electronic waste handlers for appropriate recycling or disposal.

4.5. Hazardous Chemical Waste: Hazardous chemical waste, including laboratory chemicals, solvents, acids, alkalis and chemical residues, shall be stored in clearly labelled, chemically compatible and secure containers. Such waste shall be handled by authorised personnel and disposed of through approved hazardous waste

management service providers. Hazardous chemicals shall not be discharged into drains, soil or the surrounding environment.

4.6. Biological and Clinical Waste: Biological and clinical waste, including contaminated laboratory materials, sharps and potentially infectious substances, shall be segregated, safely contained, treated and disposed of in accordance with applicable biosafety and health regulations. Sharps shall be collected in designated puncture-resistant containers.

4.7. Batteries and Lighting Waste: Used batteries, fluorescent lamps and mercury-containing equipment shall be collected separately, stored securely to prevent leakage or contamination, and transferred to authorised facilities for specialised treatment, recycling or disposal.

5. Policy Statements

5.1 Waste Minimisation

MNU shall encourage the reduction of waste generation through responsible purchasing, efficient resource utilisation, digital documentation, and the reduction of unnecessary single-use materials.

Staff and students shall be encouraged to adopt environmentally sustainable practices in teaching, research, administrative operations, and campus activities.

5.2 Waste Segregation and Collection

Waste shall be segregated at the point of generation using clearly labelled collection containers.

Separate collection arrangements shall be established for general waste, recyclable materials, organic waste, electronic waste, and hazardous waste.

Waste collection points shall be maintained in hygienic conditions and positioned to minimise environmental and public health risks.

5.3 Hazardous Waste Management

MNU shall ensure that hazardous materials generated through teaching, research, laboratory activities, maintenance, and other campus operations are managed safely. The following requirements shall apply:

5.3.1. Hazardous waste shall be identified and classified according to its chemical, biological, physical, or environmental risks.

5.3.2. Hazardous materials shall be stored in clearly labelled, secure, and appropriate containers.

5.3.3. Incompatible chemicals shall not be mixed or stored together.

5.3.4. Hazardous waste shall not be disposed of in ordinary waste bins, drains, soil, or surrounding marine environments.

5.3.5. Chemical and biological waste shall be handled only by appropriately trained and authorized personnel.

5.3.6. Hazardous waste shall be transferred to authorized waste management service providers for treatment or disposal.

5.3.7. Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) shall be used when handling hazardous materials.

5.3.8. Relevant safety data sheets and emergency procedures shall be accessible wherever hazardous chemicals are used or stored.

5.4 Electronic Waste Management

5.4.1. Electronic waste, including obsolete computers, laboratory equipment, printers, batteries, and electronic accessories, shall be collected separately from general waste.

5.4.2. Where feasible, functioning electronic equipment shall be repaired, reused, or reassigned before disposal.

5.4.3. Electronic waste shall be transferred to authorized recycling or disposal facilities, with appropriate documentation maintained.

5.5 Laboratory and Research Waste

All laboratories and research facilities shall establish waste management procedures appropriate to the materials used and the activities conducted. Laboratory supervisors shall ensure that:

5.5.1. Hazardous materials are appropriately identified and labelled.

5.5.2. Chemical and biological waste are segregated according to their characteristics.

5.5.3. Sharps are collected in puncture-resistant containers.

5.5.4. Waste storage areas are secure and regularly inspected.

5.5.5. Staff and students receive appropriate laboratory safety training.

5.5.6. Waste disposal activities are documented where required.

5.6 Environmental Protection

5.6.1. Waste management practices shall minimise the risk of contamination of groundwater, coastal environments, marine ecosystems, and surrounding communities.

5.6.2. Open burning, uncontrolled dumping, and unauthorised disposal of hazardous materials shall be prohibited within MNU premises.

5.6.3. Waste shall be managed in accordance with applicable Maldivian environmental legislation, regulatory requirements, and relevant institutional safety procedures.

6. Waste Management Procedures

MNU shall establish and implement appropriate waste management procedures to ensure the safe identification, segregation, storage, collection, disposal and monitoring of waste generated across its campuses. The following procedures shall apply:

6.1 Waste Identification

All staff, students and laboratory personnel shall identify and classify waste at the point of generation according to its nature, characteristics and potential environmental or health risks.

6.2 Waste Segregation

Waste generators and facilities personnel shall ensure that waste is segregated into appropriate categories and placed in clearly labelled containers to facilitate safe handling, recycling, treatment and disposal.

6.3 Temporary Storage

Campus administration and laboratory supervisors shall ensure that waste is stored in designated areas prior to collection. Hazardous waste shall be securely contained, appropriately labelled and stored under suitable conditions to prevent leakage, contamination and environmental hazards.

6.4 Waste Collection

Campus facilities management shall coordinate regular waste collection to prevent unnecessary accumulation and ensure that waste is handled safely and efficiently.

6.5 Waste Disposal

Designated campus administration shall arrange for the transfer of waste to authorised waste collection, recycling or treatment service providers. Hazardous waste shall be disposed of using appropriate methods to minimise risks to human health, terrestrial ecosystems and the surrounding environment.

6.6 Documentation and Record Keeping

Designated responsible officers shall maintain appropriate records of hazardous waste generation, collection, transfer and disposal to ensure accountability, traceability and compliance with applicable environmental and safety requirements.

6.7 Monitoring and Compliance

Campus administration and designated safety personnel shall conduct periodic inspections and monitor waste management practices to assess compliance with this policy. Any identified deficiencies or unsafe practices shall be addressed through appropriate corrective measures.

These procedures shall be implemented across all MNU campuses to promote responsible waste management, prevent environmental pollution, minimise soil and terrestrial ecosystem contamination, and support the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable management of land resources.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 University Management

University management shall provide institutional oversight, approve necessary resources, and support implementation of waste management practices across MNU campuses.

7.2 Campus Administration and Facilities Management

Campus administration and facilities management shall coordinate waste collection, provide suitable waste segregation facilities, maintain designated waste storage areas, and arrange waste disposal services.

7.3 Faculty, Laboratory and Research Supervisors

Supervisors shall ensure the safe management of waste generated through academic and research activities, including hazardous chemicals, biological materials, and laboratory equipment.

7.4 Staff and Students

All staff and students shall comply with waste segregation procedures, minimise unnecessary waste generation, and report unsafe waste handling or disposal practices to the relevant campus administration.

7.5 Contractors and Service Providers

Contractors and waste management service providers shall comply with applicable environmental, health, and safety requirements when handling waste generated within university premises.

8. Training and Awareness

MNU shall promote awareness of sustainable waste management through staff orientation, student induction, campus awareness activities, and laboratory safety training.

Personnel handling hazardous waste shall receive appropriate instruction on waste identification, segregation, safe handling, storage, emergency response, and disposal procedures.

9. Monitoring and Reporting

Campus administration shall undertake periodic monitoring of waste management practices to assess compliance with this policy.

Monitoring activities may include:

Inspection of waste segregation and storage facilities.

Review of hazardous waste disposal records.

Identification of unsafe waste handling practices.

Assessment of opportunities to reduce waste generation.

Documentation of incidents involving hazardous materials.

Implementation of corrective actions where necessary.

Records of hazardous waste transfers and disposal shall be maintained to support institutional accountability and environmental reporting.

10. Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed every three years, or earlier where necessary, to reflect changes in national environmental regulations, institutional operations, waste management technologies, and relevant sustainability standards.