

## MANAGEMENT OF AEROSOL CONTAINERS



### WHAT ARE THE SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS FOR AEROSOL CONTAINERS?

Aerosol products are found throughout the university. Many of these containers contain hazardous ingredients, either the product, the propellant or both. All present a hazard because of the compressed gas used as a propellant. If punctured, the contents may be released so forcefully that injuries can result. Also, pressurized containers delivered to a landfill present safety concerns during compacting. It is important to manage the disposal of aerosol containers properly to avoid injury to people or damage to the environment.

Aerosol cans that have been emptied of their contents and propellant to the point that the pressure in the cans is at ambient room air pressure (nothing comes out when the spray valve is depressed) and there is no detectable product (nothing can be heard sloshing inside) may be discarded as regular trash. If an aerosol can is not empty or cannot be emptied, it must be manifested as hazardous waste. The proper packing code is 07CG (compressed gas). Full and partially full aerosol cans must be disposed as hazardous waste because they are under pressure, even if the material in the can would normally be classified as non-hazardous.

### HOW CAN I REDUCE MY AEROSOL CONTAINER WASTE?

- ✓ Determine whether or not a product is needed. Could the process using the aerosol be eliminated?
- ✓ If required, choose a non-hazardous product, or the least hazardous product, that will do the job.
- ✓ Use only as much as is needed.
- ✓ Store aerosol containers away from moisture, sunlight, and extreme heat or cold.
- ✓ Follow the label instructions to clean the nozzle after each use.
- ✓ Use the entire contents of a container before buying others. Purchase according to demand so that the product's shelf life does not expire.
- ✓ Consider purchasing products in bulk and using either a refillable container with compressed air as the propellant or a non-aerosol pump applicator.