

Glutaraldehyde and *Ortho*-Phthalaldehyde (OPA) Disinfectant Disposal to Sewer

Trade Waste Fact Sheet No.8

Glutaraldehyde and *Ortho*-phthalaldehyde are organic substances that are commonly used as safer alternatives to formaldehyde for disinfecting medical equipment. The discharge of these materials to sewer in significant quantity or concentration can have adverse effects, including impact on the biological sewerage treatment process and potential hazards to sewer worker safety.

As with any potentially harmful material, individual dischargers must obtain approval from the Trade Waste Branch to discharge waste water containing Glutaraldehyde or *Ortho*-phthalaldehyde to sewer, as part of a trade waste discharge permit.

While specific conditions may vary for individual permits, the general guidelines are as follows;

Unless specifically authorised, all solutions containing Glutaraldehyde or *Ortho*-phthalaldehyde must be neutralised to inactivate these materials before disposal to sewer. Alternatively, solutions can be removed by a licensed liquid waste transporter for off-site treatment and disposal, or they must be batch treated in accordance with approved neutralisation protocols.

Dilution with water for the purpose of reducing contaminant concentration to meet acceptance limit is not an acceptable practice.

Solutions containing **Glutaraldehyde** can be neutralised using dibasic ammonium phosphate, glycine or an approved proprietary product. The final concentration of treated solutions must not exceed **50 mg/L** active Glutaraldehyde. Approved neutralising agents are:

- **G.N. Liquid** made by Whiteley Medical. Available from **ch2 – Clifford Hallam Healthcare** phone (08) 8407 0200
- **Formalex** made by SASCO. Available from **Blue Sky Scientific** phone (08) 8431 2864
- **KemSure OPA** and **GLUT-Rx** made by Medtex phone 1800 153 004 or (03) 9543 4800

Solutions containing ***Ortho*-phthalaldehyde** can be neutralised using glycine powder or similar proprietary product. The final concentration of treated solutions must not exceed **200 mg/L** active *Ortho*-phthalaldehyde. OPA solution DOES NOT need to be neutralised if it is used in an automated endoscope reprocessor as a SINGLE USE disinfectant, providing the final concentration of *Ortho*-phthalaldehyde in the discharge does not exceed 200mg/L.

Batch discharges of neutralised solutions would be approved in accordance with [Trade Waste Batch Treatment Guideline 17](#).

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Further information

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