



OHS ALERT!

Type of Incident	Explosion in an Autoclave and subsequent fire
Date Occurred	6 th October 2006
WHAT HAPPENED	<p>An explosion occurred in the autoclave of the biological waste contractor.</p> <p>The biological waste contractor picked up biological waste from UNSW on 6th October and took it to the waste processing centre at Unanderra.</p> <p>While decontaminating the biological waste an explosion occurred inside the autoclave. Upon removal of the waste from the autoclave it burst into flames.</p> <p>Early investigation indicates that glass vials with rubber diaphragms (GC or HPLC vial) containing chemical waste (probably a flammable liquid) were placed in the Biowaste bin. See attached Image 1 on page 2.</p> <p>The incident is currently being investigated by WorkCover and the EPA.</p> <p>The biological waste contractor is identifying the chemical found in some of the glass vials to try and determine its origin.</p>
WERE THERE ANY INJURIES	None reported at this time
Most Likely Cause	Incorrect disposal of chemical waste in the Biowaste bin.
Corrective Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All areas that generate biological waste are to review their waste disposal procedures to ensure waste segregation. • Ensure all staff and students are trained in biological waste and chemical waste disposal requirements. • UNSW to conduct random biological waste inspections.

Image 1 - Some of the vials suspected of causing the incident.

