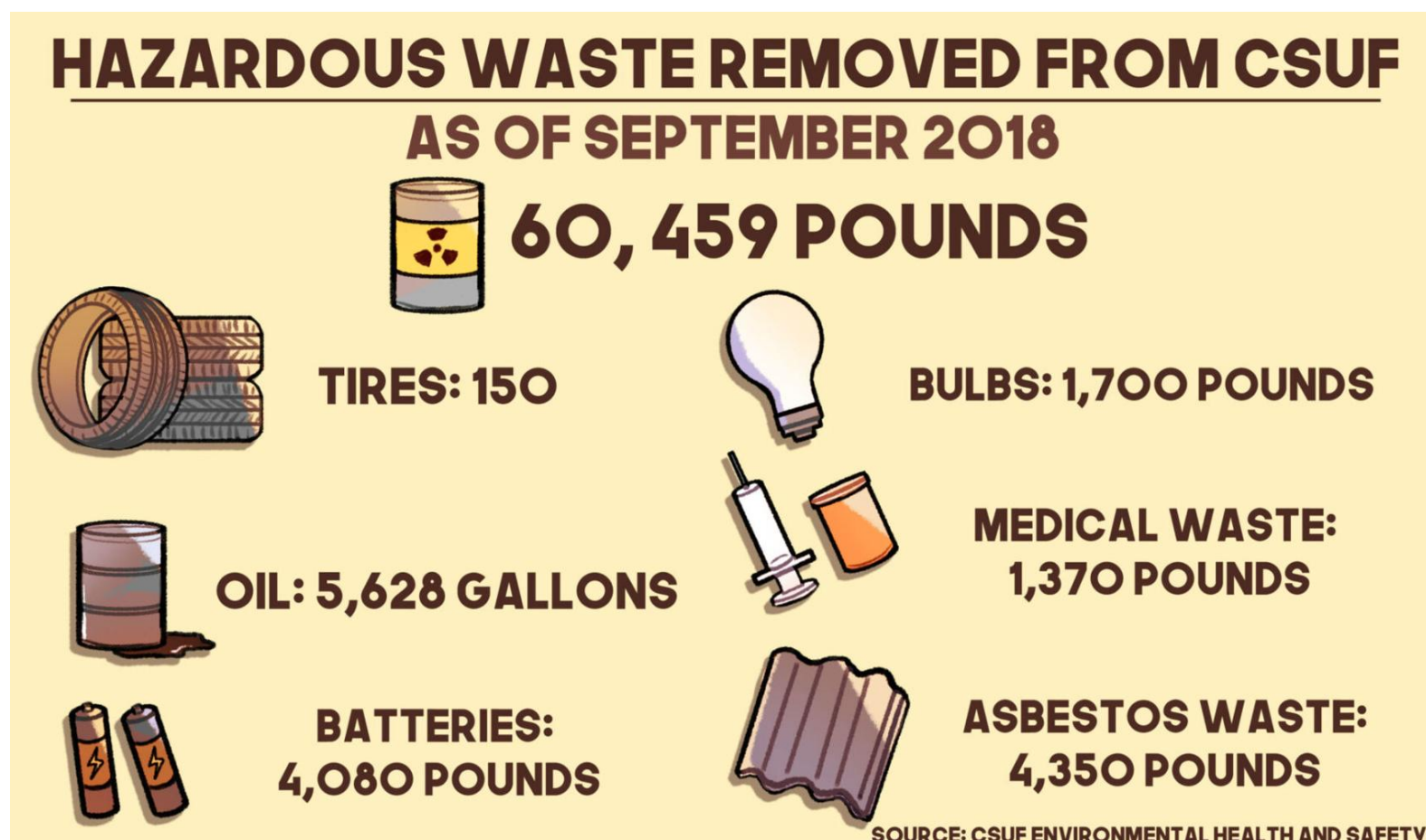


## Cal State Fullerton seeks to reduce hazardous waste

By Alec Calvillo

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(Danielle Evangelista/ Daily Titan)

As of September 2018, about 60,459 pounds of hazardous waste have been collected this year at Cal State Fullerton, said Leonardo Lopez, Environmental Health and Safety associate director.

Laboratory chemicals generate most of the hazardous waste materials produced on campus, Lopez said.

“A lot of people have the misconception that we only pick up waste from natural sciences and mathematics — chemistry, biology and all that stuff. That’s actually not the case. We manage the waste of the entire campus,” Lopez said.

Examples of other forms of hazardous materials that circulate through campus include oil, batteries, bulbs, tires, asbestos and medical waste.

The materials used in class are disposed of properly in what are called hazardous waste vessels, where hazardous waste is designated to several different containers depending on its chemical state.

These containers, along with the other hazardous waste that is collected, are stored at an undisclosed chemical storage area on campus. Every three months, a contracted company comes to pick up the accumulated waste and dispose of it properly, Lopez said.

Staff at the sciences departments have been conscious about reducing the amount of hazardous materials used in the labs for several reasons, and are hoping to restrict how much hazardous chemicals students are exposed to, said Barbara Gonzalez, Ph.D., chemistry professor at CSUF.

“We’ve reduced the risk, part of it is that we use smaller amounts. They’re not quite complete what we call microscale, but we use the smallest amount possible so that we’re not wasting and we’re not exposing students to (hazardous materials),” Gonzalez said.

The Environmental Health and Safety Office at CSUF has enforced a new barcoding system for hazardous chemical inventory to protect first responders in the event of an emergency.

The barcoding system is called Cyber Track, and was introduced this past summer as both a regulatory and safety-driven program.

“We barcode any hazardous material or chemical on this campus. With that software, we can barcode the materials and say that these chemicals belong to this professor. We generate that inventory and we keep it enacted,” Lopez said.

The new system regulates all chemical materials that come onto campus. Before it reaches the designated departments, it must first be processed through Environmental Health and Safety then it can be delivered to the departments.

While the department doesn’t determine what materials are being purchased and delivered for educational and research purposes, they make sure everything is accounted for and logged.

In addition to the safety precautions taken outside of the labs with inventory and logging, Environmental Health and Safety also provides students and professors with in-class packages for contaminations.

In the event of an exposure, there are chemical spill kits in rooms that contain products to assist in cleaning and minimizing the threat. These kits include absorbents, goggles, gloves, disposable lab coats, shoe covers, signs and a brochure with helpful steps.

For more information on safety training go to [the Environment Health and Safety website](#).