Policies: Equipment Inventory

The Physics Department adheres to UW Equipment Inventory Office policies and procedures. Complete information can be found on the UW Equipment Inventory website.

Equipment Tagging

- If equipment is greater than $5,000, it should be tagged with a white bar code tag (in a visible, central part of the equipment) within 24 hours of receipt. Even if the item is to remain in its box for some time before use, it should be opened and inspected, tagged, and the necessary identifying information recorded within 24 hours of receipt.

- If equipment is less than $5,000 and a department chooses to tag and track it, it should be tagged with a purple bar code tag (in a visible, central part of the equipment) within 24 hours of receipt. Even if the item is to remain in its box for some time before use, it should be opened and inspected, tagged, and the necessary identifying information recorded within 24 hours of receipt.

Unique Tagging Situations

There are some types of equipment that aren't as straightforward to tag.

**Personal Computers**

Under the University's Personal Computer Policy, integral personal computer components, once assembled to a central processing unit (CPU) that meet the definition of equipment should be tagged and inventoried as a single equipment item. An individual personal computer workstation consists of a CPU, operating system, monitor, keyboard, mouse, desk printer, external modem, external and internal drives, and drives installed within the purchased CPU. The tag should be placed on the CPU in a visible place (not on the back).

**No Tag Equipment**

Some assets meet the definition of equipment but are too small or delicate to affix a tag to. These are called "no tag" assets. Common examples are underwater equipment, software, or lenses. "No tag" assets are treated the same as regular assets, except for the following steps:

- Asset tag is affixed to a copy of the purchase paperwork instead of the asset and the paperwork is kept in the departmental inventory file.
- "NT " for No Tag is entered into the "How Tagged" box of the Snapshot view in OASIS.
- "Other Location" field can be populated with more specific location information such as "Used with computer 119987".

**Software**

Software over $1M is considered a University asset. To track software purchases (including upgrades) that are $1M or more, these items should be treated as a "no tag" asset or add-costed to the equipment it will be used on for its life span.
Updating a Tag Number

Tag numbers may need to be updated for a variety of reasons:

- When an equipment item is defective and is exchanged under warranty;
- When a tag is damaged;
- When a tag is being updated, such as going from an old silver tag to a bar code tag; or
- When correcting a data entry error.

Source of equipment tagging information above (Equipment Inventory Website): http://f2.washington.edu/fm/eio/tagging

Tag numbers must also be updated when their location changes. (See Department of Physics Equipment Tag Update Request Form)

Equipment Fabrication

Occasionally, there is a need to build a piece of equipment for functionality that doesn't currently exist. The equipment is built at the University. Many different categories of costs go into creating the equipment and in order to represent the true cost of the asset, these costs need to be moved to the proper equipment object code by Journal Voucher (JV). This allows for the full cost of the asset to be depreciated over its useful life and the costs to be excluded from indirect cost.

Department:

- Determines need to fabricate equipment.
- Includes fabrication in proposal with separate budget. Typically, there will be one budget number established for the fabrication and a second budget number for non-fabrication.
- If fabrication is not in proposal, requests sponsor approval, if required.
- Notifies Grant and Contract Accounting (GCA) to establish a fabrication sub-budget (with budget type and class of 05-49) to accumulate costs associated with the fabrication.
- As soon as fabrication work begins, works with departmental inventory contact to:
  - Obtain an equipment tag for the item. The tag number is needed for the next steps though it may not be affixed to the equipment at this time. The tag should be placed on the fabricated equipment item as soon as it is feasible.
  - Enter the asset information into OASIS as a 'T' status asset
- Starts building equipment.
- On an annual basis:
  - Sends fabrication JV request to transfer allowable costs to the asset and supporting BARs or MyFinancial.desktopscreen prints to Equipment Inventory at UW box 354996. Please use the fabrication fabrication JV request or similar form of supporting spreadsheet that totals equipment related expenditures by object code and includes the same information requested on the fabrication JV request form.
  - Works with departmental inventory contact to update the Date Received field in OASIS, if the original estimate has changed.

Note: A sub-budget for fabricated equipment does not eliminate the need to submit an annual fabrication JV request to Equipment Inventory to move the costs over to the appropriate equipment object code.

Source of fabrication information above: https://finance.uw.edu/eio/equipment/acquisitions/equipment-fabrication

Full Policy and Procedures, including allowable/unallowable fabrication costs: https://finance.uw.edu/eio/equipment/acquisitions/equipment-fabrication
Equipment Insurance

University property and equipment is not automatically insured. The Equipment Insurance campus-wide online program administered by the Office of Risk Management provides optional, low cost coverage for equipment owned, leased or borrowed by University departments.

Source: http://f2.washington.edu/treasury/riskmgmt/insure/EIS

Equipment Insurance Request Form

Equipment Maintenance

- Physical inventories
- Use
- Maintenance
- Consumption
- Movement
- Customs Letter

Full policy Link: https://finance.uw.edu/eio/equipment/equipment-maintenance

Equipment Disposals

**Standard Disposal** - Dispose of equipment, materials, and supplies, whether inventorial or not, through the established procedure facilitated by the Surplus Property Department. Equipment Inventory removes the record of equipment from the department’s inventory. The terms disposal and surplus are often used interchangeably.

If the equipment is **University owned**:

- Initiates request for disposal/surplus of all property (equipment and materials) through Surplus Property's online surplus request form.

If the equipment is **Federally owned** or funded on current awards, gets written approval from the sponsor before the item can be surplused, moved, transferred, or disposed of. This documentation must be complete and contain:

- Agency’s written authorization
- Appropriate disposal action, which could
  - Relieve the University of further federal accountability by giving the title to the University at which point it falls under state policies and procedures.
  - Request the University to return the equipment to the agency.
  - Request the University sell the equipment and return the proceeds to the agency less $5000 or 10% of the proceeds, whichever is less, for selling and handling expenses.
  - Transfer the equipment usage to another award by the same sponsoring agency (e.g., NIH to NIH, NASA to NASA) and leave the title with the federal government
- Date of disposal.
Inappropriate
- Throwing equipment and materials in the trash.
- Putting equipment in the hall under a sign saying ‘Free’.
- Taking home equipment, materials, supplies, or unusable parts for personal use.
- Donating equipment without appropriate approval.

Lost/Stolen Equipment
- Lost Equipment - Remove equipment from your department’s records if you are unable to locate it after applying a good faith effort. This usually occurs during a physical inventory. If the item is later found, Equipment Inventory can re-activate the item in the database.
- Stolen Equipment - Remove equipment from your department’s records if it was taken from the University without permission. It is also important that you file a police report.

Source of disposal information above: [http://f2.washington.edu/fm/eio/disposals](http://f2.washington.edu/fm/eio/disposals)

Frequently Asked Questions

Equipment Inventory Office Website: [http://f2.washington.edu/fm/eio/frequently-asked-questions](http://f2.washington.edu/fm/eio/frequently-asked-questions)

Department of Physics
University of Washington
Physics-Astronomy Building, Rm. C121
Box 351560
Seattle, WA 98195-1560

Phone: (206) 543-2770
Fax: (206) 685-0635
physrecep@uw.edu

Source URL: [https://phys.washington.edu/policies-equipment-inventory](https://phys.washington.edu/policies-equipment-inventory)