Safe Disposal of Photocopier/Printer Toner:

There have been situations where staff emptying garbage bins have been exposed to photocopier toner because the toner had been emptied directly into the garbage bins by users.

Be sure that all photocopier/printer toner is packaged/disposed of so as to avoid exposure of staff to loose toner powder. This can be achieved by either sealing the waste toner containers with screw top lids or placing the loose waste toner in thick plastic bags which are securely sealed.

Please note that most toner cartridges should not be thrown away, but re-packaged properly and returned to shipping/receiving for recycling. The toner box should be labelled "Used Toner-Recycle".

The Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for the toner should be available to all staff. It has information on handling, storage and provides the health and safety information needed to identify and assess hazards.

Photocopier toner when used properly is of little hazard. The main ingredient is carbon black which is dispersed in a heat sensitive polystyrene acrylic. It can be irritating if inhaled and may cause eye irritation but it is unlikely to cause skin irritation. The health concern with loose toner relates specifically to the aggravation of asthma and other sensitive respiratory conditions.

Please feel free to contact our office for further information on this or any other concerns or visit the Environmental Health and Safety Office webpage at: http://www.umanitoba.ca/admin/human_resources/ehso/