6 NYCRR Subpart 374-3 from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) sets the Standards for Universal Wastes. The University at Albany incorporates these standards into their Universal Waste Disposal Policy and Guidelines.

Subpart 374-3 establishes requirements for managing Batteries, Pesticides, Thermostats and Lamps as Universal Waste as described in subdivision 374-3.1.  
http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/99942.html

BATTERIES:
Universal Waste Definition of a Battery:
“Battery” means a device consisting of one or more electrically connected electrochemical cells which is designed to receive, store, and deliver electric energy. An electrochemical cell is a system consisting of an anode, cathode, and an electrolyte, plus such connections (electrical and mechanical) as may be needed to allow the cell to deliver or receive electrical energy. The term battery also includes an intact, unbroken battery from which the electrolyte has been removed.

All used or unwanted batteries generated at the University at Albany must be disposed as either universal waste or hazardous waste.

Spent lead-acid batteries not handled as hazardous waste, must go out as universal waste. Vendors supplying lead-acid batteries to the University at Albany shall be required to remove and dispose of these batteries when discarded by the University at Albany as universal waste in accordance with Subpart 374-3 and state contract requirements. Anyone disposing of lead-acid batteries through the state contracts must keep on file all signed shipping papers for at least three years.

All other types of batteries, such as alkaline, nickel cadmium, nickel iron, nickel metal hydride, carbon zinc, zinc air, mercuric oxide, button cells, silver oxide, zinc carbon (mercury-containing), mercury, alkaline (mercury-containing), lithium metal, ion and magnesium, lead-acid and sealed lead-acid (non-automotive), are all considered to be universal wastes when discarded and to be handled in accordance with Subpart 374-3.

Used batteries should be:
- sorted by type for disposal
- stored in a cool and dry area
- should be stored in nonconductive storage containers
- packaged separately if the battery shows evidence of leakage, spillage or damage
- not stored with flammable materials
- all coin, 9 volt, sealed lead acid and lithium batteries should have their positive terminal ends taped or individually bagged prior to storage.
The Office of Environmental Health and Safety is responsible for coordinating the disposal of universal waste at the University at Albany. Contact the Office of Environmental Health and Safety at 442-3495 in Chemistry B73, if you have any questions about battery disposal, if you need waste battery containers or if you have batteries that need to be discarded.

PESTICIDES:
Universal Waste Definition of a Pesticide:
"Pesticide" means any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating any pest, or intended for use as a plant regulator, defoliant…"

All discarded or recalled pesticides at the University at Albany are to be handled as either universal waste or hazardous waste, depending on the pesticide. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety coordinates the disposal of discarded or recalled pesticides and must be contacted at 442-3495 in Chemistry B73, whenever pesticides are ready for disposal or when a pesticide has been recalled as defined in Subpart 374-3.

MERCURY THERMOSTATS:
Universal Waste Definition of a Thermostat:
"Thermostat" means a temperature control device that contains metallic mercury in an ampule attached to a bimetal sensing element, and mercury-containing ampules that have been removed from these temperature control devices in compliance with the requirements of subparagraphs 374-3.2(d)(3)(i) or 374-3.3(d)(3)(ii) of this Subpart.

All discarded mercury thermostats must be handled as either universal waste or hazardous waste at the University at Albany. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety at 442-3495 in Chemistry B73 will coordinate the disposal of any mercury thermostats generated at the University at Albany. Mercury thermometers are disposed of as hazardous waste through the EH&S Office. The EH&S Office will swap out, at no charge, any mercury-containing thermometers for non-mercury containing ones. Please contact the Office in advance, to arrange a swap out.

LAMPS:
Universal Waste Definition of a Lamp:
"Lamp" also referred to as "universal waste lamp" is defined as the bulb or tube portion of an electric lighting device. A lamp is specifically designed to produce radiant energy, most often in the ultraviolet, visible, and infra-red regions of the electromagnetic spectrum. Examples of common universal waste electric lamps include, but are not limited to, fluorescent, high intensity discharge, neon, mercury vapor, high pressure sodium, and metal halide lamps.

All lamps/bulbs, excluding incandescent, are to be handled as either universal or hazardous waste at the University at Albany, due to their mercury content. This includes all fluorescent lamps (including U-shaped, circular and compact), High Intensity Discharge (HID), metal halide, mercury-containing bulbs from instruments, such as microscopes (HBO short arc lamps), etc. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety coordinates the disposal of all discarded lamps (except incandescent) at the University at Albany. The Environmental Health and Safety Office (EH&S) must be contacted at 442-3495 in Chemistry B73 for proper packaging instructions and turnover to EH&S. It is important to prevent breakage of any lamp/bulb prior to disposal, in order to not release minor amounts of mercury into the air.
Used lamps should always be stored in a sealed container and the container labeled with a Universal Waste label, including the start accumulation date (the date the first piece of universal waste was put in the container.)

COMPUTER MONITORS AND ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS/EQUIPMENT:
Though not technically considered universal waste, computer monitors and electronic components/equipment may contain heavy metals, such as lead, that are hazardous to the environment when disposed of incorrectly. The University at Albany recycles all computer monitors and electronic components/equipment, once Equipment Management has declared it as surplus equipment. Contact the Office of Environmental Sustainability at 442-2592 for more information.

IMPORTANT FACTS FOR GENERATORS OF UNIVERSAL WASTE

1. Universal Waste is regulated by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC).
2. Universal Waste is defined as used batteries, used lamps, pesticides and mercury thermostats.
3. All Universal Waste containers must be label with the words “Universal Waste” with the container’s contents, e.g., Universal Waste – Lamps.
4. All Universal Waste must be kept in sealed containers, even when the container is not full and the plan is to put more Universal Waste in the container, when more is generated.
5. All Universal Waste containers should have a start accumulation date on the Universal Waste label. This accumulation date is the date the first piece of Universal Waste was placed in the container.
6. Any broken lamps must be placed in a labeled Hazardous Waste container.
7. A leaking or damaged battery must be placed in a separate container.