

SAFE DISPOSAL OF:

Lancets
Syringes
Needles

RECYCLING GUIDE: If medical waste materials are not properly discarded, family members, waste and recycling workers can be injured. Sharps may end up in places where they are a danger to the public such as streets and beaches.

Household medical waste is currently allowed in landfills because no other systemic collection procedure exists. Household medical waste can go safely to landfills when properly contained.

HOUSEHOLD MEDICAL WASTE

Safe handling of household medical waste depends on help from residents in preparing waste materials for pickup. The proper preparation of syringes is as follows:

- **Mark a sturdy container as “Hazardous Medical Waste”.** Bleach or detergent jugs are good containers to use.
 - **Replace caps on “sharps”** and put them, point side down, in the container.
 - **When filled, replace the original cap** of the container, and secure it with strong tape.
 - Place the sealed container in the garbage can, bag or dumpster.
 - **Remember,** “sharps” include both lancets used to monitor blood glucose and syringes used to take insulin.
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The Washtenaw County Division of Public Works has launched a “sharps return program” in partnership with several area pharmacies for disposal of used sharps, including disposable lancets and syringes with attached needles. Other counties also have similar programs. Additionally, **many pharmacies will provide containers for collection of sharps and later dispose of it for a small fee.**

For information about what is available where you live call your local Department of Public Works, the Department of Solid Waste Disposal or check with your pharmacist.

Why dispose of sharps?

Q: If it is still legal to place household sharps into residential trash, why should I take them to a pharmacy?

A: Inside a trash can or bag the loose or containerized sharps can injure family members or waste collectors or inappropriately fall into the hands of children or people with substance abuse problems. Once in the refuse truck, sharp containers are likely to break open from the pressure of the trash compactors. Many workers run the risk of sharps contact from trash on sorting floors, in recycling lines and landfill operations.

Q: I’m not infectious, why does it matter if people are poked with my sharps?

A: Even if you are not infectious, people that may happen to get stuck with your sharps will not know that. This may result in stress or panic attacks and many expensive blood tests. Also these could fall into the hands of people with drug abuse problems.

Q: What diseases are spread by sharps?

A: Hepatitis, HIV, tetanus and other fatal diseases.

SHARPS POINTERS

- **DO** store sharps container in areas that are child and animal proof.
- **DO** label sharps containers “**SHARPS, Dispose of Properly**”.
- **DO** secure the top of a full sharps container and seal with sturdy tape.
- **DO** handle sharps used away from home in a responsible manner as well.
- **DO NOT** place loose sharps into the trash.
- **DO NOT** break, bend, clip, recap or reuse needles.
- **DO NOT** place sharps in aluminum cans, coffee cans, glass or clear plastic containers. *THESE BREAK TOO EASILY.*
- **DO NOT** place sharps containers in recycling bins.
- **DO NOT** flush sharps down the toilet.

SHARPS DISPOSAL SITES IN “WASHTENAW COUNTY”

The following locations are participating with the Michigan Medical Waste Regulatory Program to accept used residential sharps. Sharps are accepted in containers only.

Ann Arbor

Home Toxics Collection Center
734-222-3950

McAuley Pharmacy
St. Joseph Health Mercy System
Reichert Health Building
5333 McAuley Dr.
734-712-2222

Pharmacy Solutions
5204 Jackson Rd.
734-821-80000

Village Pharmacy
325 N. Maple Rd.
734-668-9600

Chelsea

Chelsea Care Pharmacy
Chelsea Community Hospital
775 S. Main St.
734-475-3996

Chelsea Pharmacy
1050 S. Main St.
734-475-1188

Dexter

Dexter Pharmacy
7039 Dexter-Ann Arbor Rd.
734-426-1600

Milan

Miller Drugs
13 W. Main St.
734-439-8877

Saline

St. Joseph Mercy Saline Hospital
400 Russell
734-429-1666

Ypsilanti

Bailes Pharmacy
100 Ecorse Rd.
734-482-1034

Clark Professional Pharmacy
3075 Clark Rd.
734-434-7333