

Safe Disposal of Sharps at Home

Environmental Health Services
Florida Department of Health

food hygiene

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DIVISION OF
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A Safe Way to Dispose of Sharps



There are over 14 million Americans with diabetes. In Florida, more than 200,000 insulin-dependent individuals produce an estimated 600,000 syringes each day.

Infectious diseases such as HIV, AIDS, and Hepatitis B and C can be transmitted by improperly discarding sharps (needles, syringes, and lancets). To keep our communities safe, it is important to properly dispose of your used sharps.

In order to reduce accidental needle sticks, the Florida Department of Health encourages individuals to find out how their county health department recommends disposing of used sharps. If you reside in the State of Florida and there is no sharps disposal program in your county, the Florida Department of Health recommends that you safely dispose of your own sharps by following the steps listed below.

Steps for Safe Sharps Removal

- Step 1** All sharps should be disposed of in rigid puncture-resistant containers such as liquid detergent bottles, bleach bottles or metal containers.
- Step 2** Perform your routine blood tests and injections and place the used sharps into the containers.
- Step 3** Containers should be three-quarters full.
- Step 4** All containers should have a lid which must be tightly sealed before it goes into residential garbage. Masking tape can be used to help secure the lid.
- Step 5** Place container in residential garbage or dispose of it at the county's landfill.
- Step 6** Check with your local waste collection service to make sure these disposal procedures are accepted in your county.

To Prevent Accidental Needle Sticks

- Never throw sharps directly into the garbage
- Never flush, bury, or burn sharps
- Never use a container that is not rigid and puncture-resistant
- Never use clear plastic or glass containers
- Never mix sharps with recyclable items
- Never leave sharps accessible to others

If someone in your home has an accidental needle stick, **CONTACT YOUR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL IMMEDIATELY.**



Questions or Comments, contact:

The Florida Department of Health
Division of Environmental Health
Bureau of Facility Programs/HSEF
4052 Bald Cypress Way, BIN A08
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1710
Telephone: 850-245-4277