

Best Management Practices for N.H. Solid Waste Facilities

Household Sharps

Household generated “sharps” include hypodermic needles and syringes, lancets and infusion sets. They are typically used in the home for insulin injection or for administering other medications. Sharps can carry human and animal disease. As a result, careless disposal of sharps in the general household trash puts neighbors, children and waste workers at risk of needle stick injuries and possible life-long health problems.

Although placing household generated sharps in the regular trash is allowed if properly contained, residents have other options such as using a Container Mail Back Program that distributes empty containers for clients to fill and mail back for safe disposal. There may be a charge for such services. Go to www.safeneedledisposal.org for more information. Another alternative is using a specially designed needle cutter or home incineration device purchased from pharmacies.

Best Management Practices for Household Sharps

- Let residents who bring trash to your facility know that they should not throw out their sharps with their regular waste unless they put them in a container that is rigid and puncture-proof, such as a laundry detergent bottle that has the screw-top securely taped and is labeled “Medical Sharps Container – Not for Recycling”.
- Let residents know that printable labels are available on the NHDES website. Go to www.des.nh.gov,

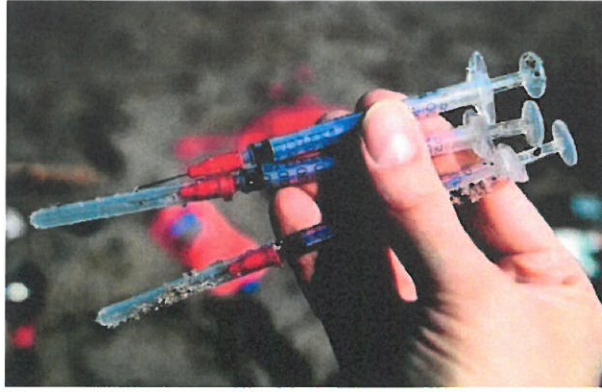
click on “A to Z List” and scroll down to “Sharps Disposal”. Rolls of preprinted labels are also available from NHDES for local transfer stations to distribute to residents, while supplies last.

- If you see a container on the tipping floor labeled “Medical Sharps Container – Not for Recycling”, make sure it does not go into a recycling bin. It should be disposed of in a landfill or incinerator.
- Train workers to be aware of needle stick hazards and to report injuries immediately for proper medical attention.
- If you find needles or other sharps not in containers, for example loose on the tipping floor, have them removed by trained workers wearing protective equipment including leather gloves. Package and dispose of them as described above.
- For more information about proper sharps disposal, contact NHDES.

Did You Know?

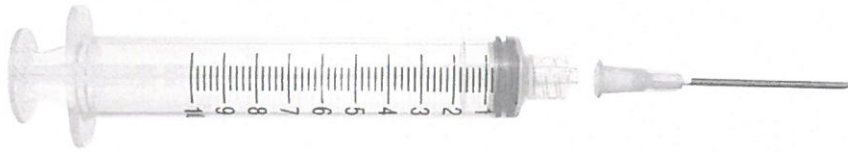
- Needle stick injuries are a serious public health risk to family members as well as to solid waste operators.
- Many different facilities generate infectious wastes, including doctor and dentists’ offices, hospitals, clinics, schools, nursing homes, mortuaries and veterinary facilities.





Syringes have the needle part commonly known as "sharps."

MEDICAL SHARPS CONTAINER!



NOT FOR RECYCLING!

www.des.nh.gov

Funded by NH Dept. of Environmental Services, NH Local Government Center, Granite State Diabetes Educators & NH Medical Society

The above label is available from NHDES for containers of sharps brought into your facility.

For additional information, contact:

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