

# Disposal of Personal Use Needles and Syringes

The campus Sharps (including needles and syringes) Disposal Program is administered by the Biological Safety Section, Division of Research Safety. The program provides the following services:

- Safer handling of potentially hazardous waste materials.
- Campus Stores delivery of appropriate sharps disposal containers directly to employees who need to use needles and syringes for medical reasons while at work.
- Pick-up of full sharps disposal containers by the Biological Safety Section.
- Proper treatment and disposal of sharps in accordance with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations.

## **I have a medical condition that necessitates my use of needles and syringes while I am at work. How can I dispose of the used needles and syringes while at work?**

Illinois regulations dictate that we must dispose of needles and syringes appropriately when they are used in the workplace. Appropriate disposal is NOT simply placing these items in the garbage can. Remember that another person must empty that garbage can and, later, that trash is sorted manually for recycling purposes. There is a real potential that someone might suffer a needle-stick injury if these items are placed in the trash. Plus, Illinois regulations state that we must also render a needle/syringe "unrecognizable". Simply putting it in the garbage to be sent to the landfill does not fulfill our legal obligation. However, if the needle/syringes are disposed of in a sharps disposal container, the campus can then dispose of these items in a manner that will ensure no one is injured and in compliance with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations.

## **How do I obtain a delivery of a sharps disposal container?**

Approved sharps disposal containers are available from Campus Stores, *at no charge*, to employees who need them to dispose of needles/syringes while at work. Call 244-0139 or e-mail your request to [cstores@illinois.edu](mailto:cstores@illinois.edu) You can also use a sharps request form available from Campus Stores and Receiving and mail it to 1609 S. Oak, Champaign, MC-662 or fax it to 244-1790. The containers will generally be delivered within three working days of the request.

## **How do I obtain a pick-up for full sharps disposal containers?**

When a sharps disposal container is full, go to the DRS website <http://www.drs.illinois.edu/sharps/> and complete the online Sharps Collection Request form. The container will generally be picked up within three working days of the request.

## **How do I handle sharps (needles and syringes)?**

First, obtain an approved sharps disposal container from Campus Stores. These containers are closable, puncture resistant, leak-proof on the sides and bottoms, and available in 1-quart, 2-gallon, and 8-gallon sizes. When discarding sharps:

- Place the item into the sharps disposal container, immediately following use.
- Never empty the contents of the sharps disposal container into another container.
- Never remove the lid from the container.
- Never overfill a sharps disposal container; no materials should be sticking out the top.
- Never force materials into a sharps disposal container.



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## **What else can I dispose of in the sharps disposal container?**

Sharps disposal containers are only for items defined by Illinois regulation as "sharps", such as needles and syringes. Other waste, like Kleenex or candy bar wrappers should go in the regular trash. If you have questions about the definition of a "sharp", please contact with the Biological Safety Section at 333-2755 or [via e-mail](mailto:bss@illinois.edu) at [bss@illinois.edu](mailto:bss@illinois.edu).

## **Questions?**

Contact the Division of Research Safety, Biological Safety Section (333-2755 or [via e-mail](mailto:bss@illinois.edu) at [bss@illinois.edu](mailto:bss@illinois.edu)) or visit our web site: <http://www.drs.illinois.edu/bss/>.

Other Biosafety Fact Sheets are available from the Biological Safety Section at our web site: <http://www.drs.illinois.edu/bss/factsheets/>.

