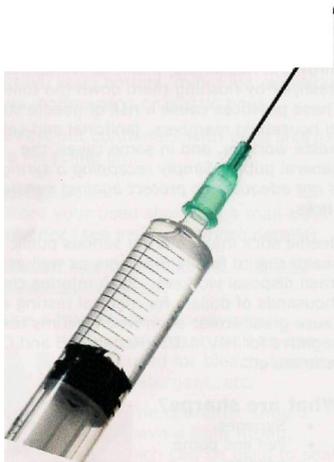


Don't STICK someone else with your PROBLEM...



MEDICAL SHARPS:

Proper Disposal in the Home

THE PROBLEM...



Each year, tens of thousands of Maine residents give themselves millions of shots for medical conditions such as diabetes, allergies, HIV, arthritis, migraines, etc. Most of these needles and lancets, often referred to as "sharps", are thrown in household, public or workplace trash, or by flushing them down the toilet. These practices cause a risk of needle sticks to household members, janitorial and solid waste workers, and in some cases, the general public. *Simply recapping a syringe is not adequate to protect against needle sticks.*

Needle stick injuries are a serious public health risk to family members as well as trash disposal workers. Such injuries cost thousands of dollars for medical testing and cause great stress even when victims test negative for HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B and C, tetanus, etc.

What are sharps?

- Syringes
- Pen and pump needles
- Lancets
- Infusion sets



Why is the safe disposal of sharps important?

- > To prevent injury or illness to others
- > To protect waste handlers
- > To help decrease pollution in the environment

CAUTION SHARPS USERS!

NEVER throw loose sharps into the trash or toilet.

NEVER leave sharps anywhere they could injure someone.



NEVER store used sharps in glass bottles, soda bottles, milk jugs, aluminum cans, coffee cans or plastic bags.

NEVER put containers with used sharps in a recycling bin.

INSTEAD.

- Store your used sharps in a mail-back container.

Although less desirable, the following method can be used:

- Use a thick-walled, sturdy plastic container such as one used for fabric softener, laundry detergent, etc.



The container should have a tight fitting, screw-type lid which can be used to seal the sharps when **half-full**.

- Label the container with the words **'SHARPS'** and **"DO NOT RECYCLE."**
- Seal the container with heavy-duty tape before disposing in your blue bag.

