

How to Safely Dispose of Home Medical Sharps

What is the Importance of **Safe** disposal Of Medical Sharps?

Proper disposal of sharp objects (sharps) helps prevent injury, illness and pollution.

- The Environmental Protection Agency monitors syringe and sharps disposal.
- You must properly dispose of syringes and sharps for your own safety and the safety of others.
- Home care providers and health care institutions are **not allowed** to pick up or receive medical waste or sharps from your home.
- Your state or community environmental program can suggest the proper way to dispose of your medical waste.

What Containers Can I Use to Dispose of Sharps?

- Use **hard-plastic or metal containers** with a screw-on or tightly secured lid
 - Household containers are fine (e.g., laundry detergent bottles).
 - Specially designed containers to dispose of medical waste sharps can be purchased.
 - Sharps container must be made of non-breakable material with a lid that can be securely closed.
 - **Do not use glass, clear or thin plastic containers.**
 - **Keep out of the reach of children and pets.**
- Recyclable containers can be used.
 - Separate from other recyclables.
 - Label container **“Not for Recycling”**.
 - Do not put sharp objects in any container you plan to recycle or return to a store.
- Place needles, syringes (even if no needle is attached), IV spike without an attached bag, lancets and other sharp objects into the container.
- Notify your home care provider (if they supply the sharps container) to deliver a new container when the one in use is approximately 75% full.

How do I Safely Dispose of the Sharps Container?

- Reinforce the lid with heavy-duty tape before discarding.
- Contact the **Department of Environmental Quality Assurance Center (1-800-662-9278)** to find out if there's a needle/sharp collection program in your area.
- Waste disposal varies from state to state. Check with your local environmental program to see how to properly dispose of your medical waste.

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| Genesee County | (810) 762-9116 |
| Ingham County | (517) 887-4312 |
| Jackson County | (517) 788-4420 |
| Lenawee County | (517) 264-4508 |
| Livingston County | (517) 546-0040 |
| Macomb County | (586) 469-5236 |
| Monroe County | (734) 240-7800 |
| Oakland County | (248) 858-1280 |
| Saginaw County | (989) 758-3800 |
| Washtenaw County | (734) 544-6700 |
| Wayne County | (734) 727-7000 |

Where can I Learn More?

- EPA. [Protect Yourself Protect Others- Safe Options Home Needle Disposal](#) (United States Government) – Handouts in English, Spanish and Chinese
- [Sharp Collection Programs for Michigan Residents](#) (State of Michigan)

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