

# WHAT ARE SHARPS ?

Each year 8 million people across the country use more than 3 billion needles, syringes, and lancets - also called sharps - to manage medical conditions at home. Due to the hazards that unsafe disposal practices present, many states and municipalities are choosing to offer safe, convenient disposal options to sharps users.

## WHAT ARE SHARPS USED FOR?

Sharps are used to treat a number of medical conditions in the home and the number of conditions treated at home with injectable medicines continues to rise. Sharp users may use lancets, needles and/or syringes to deliver medicine for conditions such as: Allergies, Arthritis, Cancer, Diabetes, Hepatitis, HIV/AIDS, Infertility, Migraines, Multiple Sclerosis, Osteoporosis, Psoriasis and others.

## WHY IS IMPROPER DISPOSAL DANGEROUS?

**Used needles and lancets are dangerous because they can:**

- **Injure people**
- **Spread germs**
- **Spread diseases such as HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, tetanus, and syphilis**

Victims of sharps-related injuries face the cost of post-injury testing, disease prevention measures, and counseling, even if no infection or disease was spread.

## Safe Disposal Items:

- **Drop-Off Collection Sites:** Sharps users can take their filled sharps containers to any one of three transfer stations in Clark County (see back side of brochure for information). There is no cost for this service.
- **Special Waste Pickup Services:** Self-injectors can place their used sharps in a special container, similar to a recycling container, and put it outside their home for collection by trained special waste handlers. Some programs require customers to call for pickup, while others offer regular pickup schedules. There is a cost for this service.  
See: [www.safeneedledisposal.org](http://www.safeneedledisposal.org).
- **Mail Back Programs:** Used Sharps are placed in special containers which are mailed (in accordance with U.S. Postal Service requirements) to a collection site for proper disposal.  
See [www.safeneedledisposal.org](http://www.safeneedledisposal.org) for further information. See also Sharps Disposal by Mail System™ 1-800-772-5657. There is a cost for this service.

For more information about other household hazardous wastes, please call (360) 397-6118 ext 4352 or visit [www.clark.wa.gov](http://www.clark.wa.gov) - Solid Waste and Recycling or e-mail [solidwaste@clark.wa.gov](mailto:solidwaste@clark.wa.gov).

## TRANSPORTING SHARPS FOR DISPOSAL

Use an approved sharps container. If an approved container is not available, use one with a well-secured lid, preferably a screw top. Rigid plastic containers are best — for example, plastic milk, juice, or soft drink bottles. Avoid using glass which may shatter or an aluminum can which may be crushed. If using a non-approved rigid sharps container, such as an empty 2-liter bottle, please label it, **WARNING SHARPS — DO NOT RECYCLE**.

Never overfill a sharps disposal container; no materials should be sticking out of the top.

Place the items in a designated sharps disposal container immediately following use.

Never force materials into a sharps disposal container.

## REMEMBER!

### DO NOT

Throw loose sharps in the garbage  
Flush used needles down the toilet  
Put needles in recycling carts

### DO

Use on the recommended disposal methods in this brochure

***For safe disposal locations and information, please see back of brochure***



## MEDICAL WASTE SHARPS

Improper disposal of sharps can result in serious injury to sanitation workers.

### HOW CAN I SAFELY DISPOSE OF SHARPS?

Take sharps to one of the following solid waste collection facilities:

#### **Central Transfer and Recycling Center**

11034 N.E. 117th Avenue, Vancouver

(360) 256-8482

Monday - Friday, 6 A.M. to 6 P.M.

Saturday & Sunday, 8 A.M. - 4 P.M.

#### **West Van Materials Recovery Center**

6601 N.W. Old Lower River Road, Vancouver

(360) 737-1727

Monday - Friday, 6 A.M. to 6 P.M.

Saturday, 8 A.M. - 4 P.M.

#### **Washougal Transfer Station**

4020 South Grant Street; Washougal

(360) 835-2500

Monday - Friday, 7 A.M. to 5 P.M.

Saturday, 8 A.M. to 4 P.M.



**Safe Disposal**