Safe disposal of medical syringes

Sharps container exchange program

Metro

What are sharps?

Sharps are medical instruments such as needles, IV tubing with needles, scalpel blades, lancets, glass tubes and syringes that can cause injury, spread infection or pollute the environment when used or disposed of improperly.

Why is safe disposal important?

Sharps can harm people, pets and wildlife when discarded improperly. Placing hypodermic needles and other sharps in the trash, for example, exposes garbage haulers and other disposal workers to potential injury. Because of this and other public safety concerns, it's illegal in Oregon to dispose of syringes and other medical sharps in the garbage. The law also requires that medical sharps be disposed of in approved sharps containers.

What is an approved sharps container?

Oregon law requires that regulated medical waste be stored and disposed of in rigid, leakproof, puncture-resistant containers clearly marked with the biohazard symbol and sealed for safety. They're available at many local pharmacies, medical supply stores and Metro's two household hazardous waste facilities. See the back of this brochure for Metro's facility addresses. For worker safety, customers who bring sharps in containers that Metro cannot accept will be asked to transfer them to an approved container.

How can I dispose of sharps safely?

The Portland metropolitan area offers various options for safe sharps disposal. Some pharmacies and garbage haulers provide sharps containers and disposal service for a fee. Find several resources listed on the back of this brochure, or call Metro's recycling hotline at 503-234-3000 for more information.

Metro also provides an affordable container exchange program for area residents, who can take their sharps containers to the household hazardous waste facility at Metro Central Station in Northwest Portland or Metro South Station in Oregon City between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday. The program helps protect workers from the risk of needle injuries and helps maintain safe, livable neighborhoods.

Who can participate in Metro's container exchange program?

Metro's program is only for residents and households, not businesses. Group homes, residential care facilities and other commercial or business customers should contact a medical waste management company, their garbage hauler or Metro's recycling hotline at 503-234-3000 for sharps disposal options.

How does Metro's container exchange program work?

1 Enroll at one of Metro's household hazardous waste facilities for just $5 per container, and get a new sharps container at no cost each time you submit a full one for proper disposal.

2 Bring your sharps container to one of Metro's hazardous waste facilities – see the addresses on the back of this brochure – for proper disposal. A hazardous waste disposal fee of $5 for up to 35 gallons also applies.

3 Receive a new empty container.

Resources

Some garbage and recycling collection companies in the Portland metropolitan area provide sharps disposal programs for their customers. Call your hauler to learn whether it provides this service.

Metro Recycling Information
503-234-3000
www.oregonmetro.gov/recycling
Information and referral on household hazardous waste options, including sharps disposal, in the Portland metropolitan area.

Bio-Med of Oregon
541-738-6460
Supply, pickup and disposal of sharps containers for a fee in Washington and Clackamas counties.

Coalition for Safe Community Needle Disposal
800-643-1643
www.safeneedledisposal.org
Information about disposal laws and links to sharps disposal programs within the U.S. and Canada.

Critical Care BioRecovery LLC
503-698-4415
www.criticalcarebiorecovery.com/medicalwaste
Supply, pickup and disposal of sharps containers for a fee.

Metro Central Station household hazardous waste facility
503-234-3000, 6161 NW 61st St., Portland

Metro South Station household hazardous waste facility
503-234-3000, 2001 Washington St., Oregon City

Sharps Compliance Inc.
800-772-5657
www.sharpsinc.com
Supply and disposal of sharps containers by mail for a fee.

Stericycle
866-783-7422
www.stericycle.com
Supply and disposal of sharps containers by mail for a fee. Pickup for commercial accounts in Multnomah County only.

Waste Management Inc./WM Healthcare Solutions
866-931-6321
www.medwaste.wm.com
Supply and disposal of sharps containers by mail for a fee.

Metro | *Making a great place*

Clean air and clean water do not stop at city limits or county lines. Neither does the need for jobs, a thriving economy, and sustainable transportation and living choices for people and businesses in the region. Voters have asked Metro to help with the challenges and opportunities that affect the 25 cities and three counties in the Portland metropolitan area.

A regional approach simply makes sense when it comes to providing services, operating venues and making decisions about how the region grows. Metro works with communities to support a resilient economy, keep nature close by and respond to a changing climate. Together we're making a great place, now and for generations to come.

Stay in touch with news, stories and things to do.
www.oregonmetro.gov/connect

Metro Council President
Tom Hughes

Metro Council
Shirley Craddick, District 1; Carlotta Collette, District 2; Carl Hosticka, District 3; Kathryn Harrington, District 4; Rex Burkholder, District 5; Barbara Roberts, District 6

Auditor
Suzanne Flynn

Printed on recycled-content paper.
12026_SUS_mdw