

SAFE SYRINGE DISPOSAL GUIDE FOR HOME GENERATED MEDICAL WASTE

If you produce any medical waste at home, this Guide may apply to you.

2008

INTRODUCTION

Home generators of medical waste may account for the use of up to 700,000 sharps daily in New Jersey. The most common disease that requires self-injection of insulin and lancets to monitor blood sugar levels at home is diabetes. Data for 2000-2002 indicates that there are approximately 24,000 individuals over the age of 18 who have been diagnosed as diabetic in the State of New Jersey. (*NJDHSS Center for Health Statistics*) Further, it is estimated that an additional 134,000 individuals in the same age group have diabetes but have yet to be diagnosed. (*NJDHSS Family Health Services*)

The proper disposal of home generated medical waste is an important step that all home generators of medical waste can take to help ensure the health and safety of all New Jerseyans.

WHAT HEALTH EFFECTS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH IMPROPER DISPOSAL OF HOME GENERATED MEDICAL WASTE?

The improper disposal of home generated medical waste poses a potential health hazard to many, including family members, sanitation workers, people in the community, hotel housekeeping staffs and school personnel. Although rare, diseases as serious as Hepatitis B and AIDS can also result from accidental needle sticks. In addition, loose syringes thrown into your household trash can also be misused if they fall into the wrong hands. Moreover, these items can injure small children, pets and wildlife.

DOES THIS GUIDE APPLY TO YOU?

The Safe Syringe Disposal Guide (Guide) applies to New Jerseyans generating medical waste at home. These individuals are referred to throughout this Guide as home generators of medical waste. *This Guide also applies to individuals visiting the State of New Jersey*

Each day, up to 700,000 syringes, needles and lancets are used by New Jerseyans

WHAT IS HOME GENERATED MEDICAL WASTE?

Home generated medical waste is created through the administration of injectable medications and other invasive or non-invasive procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, syringes, needles with attached tubing and other materials.

WHO ARE HOME GENERATORS OF MEDICAL WASTE?

Home generators of medical waste include any individual who produces waste as a result of medical care in the home (home self-care) through self-administration practices or by a family member or other person not receiving money for their services.

ARE THERE LAWS GOVERNING THE DISPOSAL OF HOME GENERATED MEDICAL WASTE IN NEW JERSEY?

Yes. The improper disposal of syringes or reusable hypodermic needles is regulated by State law (N.J.S.A. 2A:170-25.17). This Statute prohibits any person from discarding disposable or reusable hypodermic needles or syringes, in public or private places which are accessible to other persons (including trespassers) without first destroying the needle or syringe. This means you are responsible for destroying your needles and syringes, even when you visit other people. Violators of this Statute can be fined up to \$500.00 and/or imprisoned or both. *If visiting other states, check their laws to determine whether your medical waste is regulated and the proper disposal methods.*

WHAT ABOUT MEDICAL WASTE GENERATED BY MEDICAL CARE WORKERS IN YOUR HOME?

Medical waste produced by health care workers (physicians, nurses, home health aides, etc.) as a result of providing medical care in the home is *not* home generated medical waste. It is Regulated Medical Waste (RMW) as defined in the N.J.A.C. 7:26-3A, and must be disposed of by a licensed RMW generator in accordance with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) RMW regulations. **The responsibility for the proper and safe disposal of regulated medical waste rests with the health care professional providing services in the home.**

HOW CAN YOU SAFELY DISPOSE OF YOUR SYRINGES?

Several options are available to safely dispose of used syringes generated in the home.

Safe Syringe Disposal Program - The New Jersey Hospital Association together with local hospitals offer a program to safely and responsibly dispose of syringes, needles and lancets generated in the home. Participating hospitals offer rigid containers to dispose of these items for a small one time fee to individuals who are injection dependent. (This program does not require needles to be clipped prior to placing them in the container). The container must be returned to the hospital when full for proper disposal and will be exchanged for a new empty container at that time. A list of participating hospitals is provided at the end of this brochure.

See End for a List of Participating Hospitals.

Physicians - Ask your physician if she/he will take your used syringes once they are properly placed in a container.

Local Health Departments - Ask the Health Officer of your local health department if there are any syringe disposal facilities in your area. (see <http://nj.gov/health/lh/directory/lhdselectcounty.htm> for a directory of local and county NJ health departments and contact information.)

Household Waste - Follow these steps to safely dispose of your syringes in your municipal trash. Your syringes must be placed in rigid containers that will protect people from needle sticks and use containers that are unlikely to break open on its way to the landfill.

1. Rigid Container You may use empty laundry detergent bottles or 2-liter soda 'pop' bottles or other rigid containers with screw-on caps to dispose of needles and syringes. Check with a pharmacy. Ask if it sells commercial containers specially designed to hold sharps for disposal in your household trash.

2. Label/Warning Place a large label with a warning on the empty container. **Example: SYRINGES - DO NOT RECYCLE**

3. Needle Clipper Clip the needle. You can buy an inexpensive hand held needle clipper from the pharmacy. **Using anything other than a clipper to break a needle is not safe.** After clipping the needle, carefully place each of your used needles and syringes into a plastic bottle with a screw-on lid. To the extent practicable, the individual receiving the medical treatment should clip the needle and syringe and place them in the container. In cases where this cannot be done due to the limitations of that individual, and a family care giver or volunteer must perform this activity, it is recommended that the individual's physician be consulted first.

4. Seal Seal the bottle tightly with its original lid and wrap duct tape over the lid after you fill the bottle with syringes.

5. Disposal You may now dispose of the tightly sealed full container of syringes in your household garbage - **NOT** in your recycling bin. Remember, although you may feel healthy, your used syringes can transmit germs. In addition, loose syringes thrown in your trash can seriously hurt people. We all benefit from the safe disposal of syringes. Please do your part to help keep our environment clean and safe.

For additional information, you may visit the web sites listed below or contact:

New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services
Consumer and Environmental Health Services
Public Health Sanitation and Safety Program.
P.O. Box 369
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0369
Telephone: (609) 588-3124
www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/phss

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Bureau of Resource Recovery & Technical Programs
Division of Solid & Hazardous Waste
Regulated Medical Waste Program
PO Box 414, 401 East State Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0414
Telephone: (609) 984-6620
E-Mail: dshweb@dep.state.nj.us
www.state.nj.us/dep/dshw/rntp/rmw.htm

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region 2, MAIN OFFICE 290 Broadway, New York, NY 10007-1866
Phone: 212-637-3000
<http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/other/medical/sharps.htm>

Safe Syringe Disposal Update: 2008

Atlantic County

Rachael Bohs, Dir. Infection Control
Atlantic City Medical Center / City Division
Atlantic City
609-441-8988

Rachael Bohs, Dir. Infection Control
Atlantic City Medical Center / Mainland
Pomona
609-652-1000

Dave West, Environmental Services
Shore Memorial Hospital
Somers Point
(609) 653-3612

Mark Miranda, Dir. Public Affairs
Kessler Memorial Hospital
Hammonton
609-561-6700 ext.5385

Bergen County

Colleen T. Merkel (or Materials / SPD Manager)
Englewood Hospital & Medical Center
Englewood
201-894-3189

Environmental Services
Holy Name Hospital
Teaneck
201- 833-3176

Burlington County

Environmental Services
Virtua Memorial Hospital of Burlington County
Mount Holly
609-267-0700

Becky Schars, Director, The Wound Care Center
Lourdes Medical Center of Burlington County
Willingboro
609- 835-5809

Camden County

Kelly Brennan, Support Services
Cooper Health System
Camden
(856) 342- 3122

Raeann Easterday, Director
Virtua Family Health Center
Camden
856-246-3542

Patient Information
Virtua West Jersey Hospital – Berlin
Berlin
856-322-3000

Patient Information
Virtua West Jersey Hospital – Voorhees
Voorhees
856-325-3000

Environmental Services
Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center
Camden
856-757-3815

Cape May County

Maryann Viereck, Employee Health Coordinator
Cape Regional Medical Center
609-463-2491

Cumberland

Toni Whately, Environmental Services
South Jersey Healthcare – Regional Medical Center
Vineland
856-641-7510

Essex County

Kathleen Brozyna, Point of Care Coordinator
Mountainside Hospital
Montclair
973-429-6955

Ken Richter, Safety Management
St. Barnabas Medical Center
Livingston
973-322-8258

Environmental Services
UMDNJ University Hospital
Newark
973-972-4300

Gloucester County

Environmental Services
Underwood-Memorial Hospital
Woodbury
856-845-0100

Hudson County

Tom Jerkovich, Director, Environmental
Christ Hospital Home Health & Hospice Services
Jersey City
201-418-6800

Nancy Brobeck, Clinical Manager
Meadowlands Hospital Medical Center
Secaucus
201-392-3531

Hunterdon County

Carolyn Swithers, RN, Dir. of Health Education
Center for Nutrition & Diabetic Management
Wescott Medical Arts Center
Flemington
908- 237-6920

Mercer County

Environmental Service
Capital Health System at Mercer
Trenton
609-394-4184

Environmental Services
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital / Hamilton
Hamilton
609-586-7900

Joan Gilliard, Secretary
University Medical Center at Princeton
Princeton
609-497-4266

Middlesex County

Judith Leschek, Infection Control Department
JFK Medical Center
Edison
732-321-7539

Dianne Spector
Employee Health Department
St. Peter University Hospital
New Brunswick
732-745-8600 ext. 8282

Housekeeping
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital
New Brunswick
732- 828-3000

Monmouth County

Suzanne Khanna, Program Coordinator
Nova Nordisk Diabetes Center
Starr & Barry Tobias Ambulatory Center
Freehold
732-294-2574

Environmental Services
Jersey Shore University Medical Center
Neptune
732-776-4225

Environmental Services
Monmouth Medical Center
Long Branch
732-222-5200

Medical Supply
Meridian Health System at Riverview
Red Bank
732-530-2402

Morris County

Information Desk
St Clare's Hospital / Denville
Denville
973-625-6000Ch

Environmental Services
Chilton Memorial Hospital
Pompton Plains
973-831-5000

Information Desk
St. Clare's Hospital / Dover
Dover
973-989-3000

Environmental Services
Morristown Memorial Hospital
Morristown
973-971-5000

Ocean County

Carmen Gabriele, Director of Environmental Services
Community Medical Center
Toms River
732-557-8005

Patient Satisfaction Department
Kimball Medical Center
Lakewood
732- 886-4600

Ocean Medical Dialysis Center
Ocean Medical Center
Brick
732-206-8200

Environmental Services
Southern Ocean County Hospital
Manahawkin
609-978-8900

Salem County

Environmental Services
The Memorial Hospital of Salem County
Salem
856-935-1000

Linda Wendling, Manager Environmental Services
South Jersey Healthcare – Elmer Hospital
Elmer
856-363-1508

Somerset County

Sterile Processing
Somerset Medical Center
Somerville
908-685-2200

Judith Iselin, Diabetes Center Program Coordinator
Somerset Diabetes Center
908-685-2846

Sussex County

Sussex County Municipal Utilities Authority
973-579-6990

Housekeeping
St. Clare's Hospital / Sussex
Sussex
973-702-2600

Union County

Joseph Stokes, Director Environmental Services
Trinitas Hospital
Elizabeth
908-994-5077

Environmental Services
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital / Rahway
Rahway
732-381-4200

Warren County

Rich Markle, Environmental Services
Warren Hospital
Phillipsburg
908-859-6700 ext. 2043

LIST OF RESOURCES

American Diabetes Association (New Jersey)
200 Cottontail Lane, Somerset, New Jersey 08873
PHONE: (732) 469-7979 or
(888) 342-2383 (calls from New Jersey only)
(see also <http://www.diabetes.org/home.jsp>)

American Association of Diabetes Educators
100 West Monroe, 4th Floor, Chicago, IL 60603
(800) 338-3633
<http://www.aadenet.org/>

International Diabetes Center
3800 Park Nicollet Boulevard
Minneapolis, MN 55414
(888) 825-6315
<http://www.parknicollet.com/diabetes/>

Visiting Nurse Association
of Central Jersey
141 Bodman Place, Red Bank, NJ 07701-1096
(732) 747-1204
<http://www.vnacj.org/>

New Jersey Pharmacist's Association
760 Alexander Road, PO Box 1
Princeton, NJ 08543-0001
(609) 275-4246
NJPHARM@njpharma.org <http://www.njpharma.org/>