

## NEEDLE-STICK INJURIES ARE PREVENTABLE

*Each year, 8 million people across the country use 3 billion needles, syringes and lancets - also called SHARPS - to manage medical conditions at home.*

*Used sharps left loose among other trash can hurt sanitation workers. People at the greatest risk of being stuck by used sharps include sanitation and sewage treatment workers, janitors and housekeepers, and children. Those exposed to sharps face not only the risk of a painful stick, but also the risk of contracting a life-altering disease such as HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis B or C.*

*ALL needles should be treated as if they carry a disease. That means that if someone gets stuck with a needle, they have to get expensive medical tests and worry about whether they have caught a harmful or deadly disease. Be sure you get rid of your used needles the safe way to avoid exposing other people to harm.*

**OSHA requirements for sharps disposal containers state the container must be**

- **Closable**
- **Upright and stable during use**
- **Puncture resistant**
- **Leakproof at sides and bottom**
- **Properly labeled with the bio-hazard symbol and legend or color coded**

### *Where can I find more information?*

For a list of Mail-Back providers and a list of vendors of Needle Destruction Devices you can contact the Coalition for Safe Community Needle Disposal by phone at (800) 643-1643 or online at [www.safeneedledisposal.org](http://www.safeneedledisposal.org)

To learn more about regulations concerning medical waste disposal, consult EPA's Medical Waste Web site at [www.epa.gov/epaoswer/other/medical](http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/other/medical)

Sources: US Environmental Protection Agency Publication EPA530-K-04-001, Publication EPA530-F-04-004; American Diabetes Association; Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA); National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Des Moines County Area Solid Waste Commission; Code of Ordinances of the City of Burlington, Iowa, Chapter 105

CITY OF  
BURLINGTON, IOWA

*Solid Waste Department*

## Safe Needle Disposal



### DO

- Use one of the recommended disposal methods in this brochure. It could save a life!

### DON'T

- Throw loose needles in the garbage
- Flush used needles down the toilet
- Put needles in recycling containers

## Protect Yourself, Protect Others

Phone: 319-753-8114

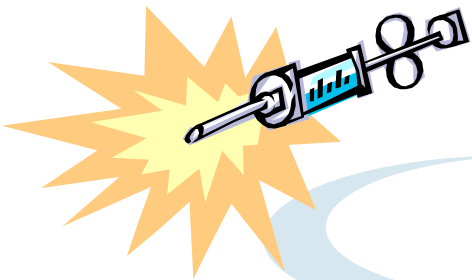
Internet: [www.burlingtoniowa.org](http://www.burlingtoniowa.org)

Email: [wasteRus@burlingtoniowa.org](mailto:wasteRus@burlingtoniowa.org)

## PROTECT YOURSELF, PROTECT OTHERS

A 44-year-old trash collector was stuck in the leg with a needle from someone's trash. A year later, he started having stomach pains. His doctor told him that he had caught Hepatitis C, probably from being stuck by the needle. Doctors have not been able to help him, and he is now in chronic liver failure. He will likely die from this disease.

It's not just trash workers who are at risk of needle sticks—it's also your neighbors, children, janitors, housekeepers, and pets. That's why used needles should not be thrown in the garbage.



Used needles and lancets are dangerous because they can:

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

### *Safe Disposal Options:*

- **Drop-off collection sites:**

Sharps users can place their used sharps in a special sharps container and take their filled sharps container to an appropriate collection site.

Locally, that includes:

- Des Moines County Health Department (gives out sharps containers to all who request them and accepts them at no charge — donations are welcome and appreciated)
- First Medical (sells sharps containers, accepts any container for free disposal)
- Heritage Medical (sells sharps containers, accepts container they sold for free disposal)
- Heritage Park & Family Pharmacy (sells sharps containers, accepts container they sold for free disposal)
- HyVee #1 & #2 (sells sharps containers, accepts container they sold for free disposal)

- **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 disposal.

- **Home needle destruction devices:**

A variety of products are available that clip, melt, or burn the needle and allow the sharps user to throw the syringe in the garbage.

**It is illegal to place needles and sharps into the garbage in Burlington, Iowa.**

**Please use a safe disposal method!**

### *"But I'm Not Infectious"*

Even if you're free of infectious disease, people who happen to get stuck by your needle will not know that. They will worry...maybe even panic. Their lives may be disrupted and they must seek medical care, including immunizations, blood tests, and extended evaluations which may last for years.

You have the power to prevent a situation like this, simply by disposing of your used sharps safely. Do not place others at risk when safe alternatives are currently available.

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