

Safe Disposal of Medical Sharps

Each year, thousands of Mainers use millions of syringes, pen needles and lancets or “sharps” to control medical conditions like diabetes, arthritis and allergies. Stockpiling used sharps in the home or improper disposal by throwing them in the trash or flushing them down the toilet puts you and your family, solid waste staff, and the general public at risk for accidental and painful needle sticks that can lead to infection, tetanus and transmission of diseases.

If you or a family member use sharps at home, you are allowed under Maine law to dispose of them in your household trash if you take the proper precautions to secure and label the container before doing so.

Homemade Household Sharps Containers

Make your own sharps container using a heavy puncture-proof plastic bottle – like for laundry detergent. Place sharps in the bottle and when it’s full, seal it with the cap and heavy-duty tape, mark “Do Not Recycle” and simply place in your **household trash** for curbside pick-up on Thursdays.