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## WHY ARE NEEDLES DANGEROUS?

They can injure people; can spread germs (hepatitis and HIV/AIDS); damage recycling equipment; and require people to be tested for years for HIV and hepatitis, if they are stuck.

## TO AVOID NEEDLE STICKS AT HOME AND PROTECT GARBAGE AND RECYCLING WORKERS, DON'T DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Don't throw loose used needles, syringes, or lancets in the garbage.
- Don't put needles in recycling containers.
- Don't flush needles down the toilet.
- Don't put needles into used thin plastic milk jugs, soda bottles or other thin containers.

## To properly and legally dispose of needles, do the following:

- Do use an approved disposal container.
- Do find a collection center for proper disposal.

For more information contact:

Wheeling-Ohio County Health Department  
1500 Chapline Street, Rm 106  
Wheeling, WV 26003  
(304) 234-3682  
[www.ohiocountyhealth.com](http://www.ohiocountyhealth.com)

**Wheeling-Ohio County  
Health Department**



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

# HOUSEHOLD GUIDE FOR DISPOSAL OF SYRINGES AND SHARPS



**Protect Yourself,  
Protect Others,  
Safe Options for Home  
Needle Disposal**



You should place:

- Needles
- Syringes
- Lancets,
- Other contaminated items

In a hard plastic or metal container with a screw-on or tightly secured lid (examples: empty laundry detergent bottle or a bleach bottle).

A coffee can will do if the plastic lid is reinforced and sealed with heavy duty tape.

Don't use glass or clear plastic containers.

1. Place the container where you will be using your syringes and sharps to minimize handling.
2. Make sure your storage location is child and animal proof.
3. Place the sharps in the containers immediately after use. DO NOT try to recap, remove, bend or break the needles.
4. When the container is nearly full add a sanitizing solution, made by one part bleach solution and ten parts of water, then seal the container using heavy duty tape.
5. Using an easy to read marker, write on the outside of the container – “DO NOT RECYCLE—TREATED SHARPS” Place the sharps container in a plastic bag and seal it with tape in case leakage occurs.
5. Discard with your regular household garbage.
6. Place any soiled bandages, disposable sheets, medical gloves separately in securely fastened plastic bags before placing them along with your other garbage.
7. Expired or no longer used medicines should be placed in the garbage in their original containers or disposed of at a designated disposal center.
8. Empty medication containers should be placed in the garbage or recycled.
9. Do not dispose of medication down the drain or toilet.
10. Always wash your hands after handling sharps.

