
FACT SHEET

PROPER DISPOSAL OF HOME HEALTH CARE WASTE

What Are Home Health Care Wastes?

The types of wastes normally encountered when administering home health care include needles, syringes, lancets, other sharp objects, soiled bandages, gauze, disposable sheets, tubings and used medical gloves.



Problems from Improper Disposal

The improper disposal of contaminated sharps is a serious safety concern for garbage collectors and landfill workers. If improperly thrown in trash bags along with regular trash, these sharps can puncture the bags and cause injury.

Disposal of Home Health Care Wastes

Prevent injury, illness and pollution by following these simple steps to dispose of sharp needles and contaminated materials used when administering home health care.

Place needles, syringes, lancets and other contaminated sharps in any strong, leak proof plastic containers, such as empty bleach, laundry detergent or dish soap containers. The container should have a small opening so that no one else is able to stick their hand into it.

The container must also be clearly marked, "BIOHAZARD." Used needles and other contaminated sharps are NOT recyclable. Keep the sharps container separate from other materials that you set aside for recycling.

You do not have to recap, purposely bend, break, or otherwise manipulate needles before inserting them into the disposal container. Drop all parts into the container.

Sharps should be sterilized or be chemically disinfected prior to disposal. Once your container is full, fill the container with one part bleach solution and ten parts of water. Allow solution to soak for twenty minutes. Then, pour the solution into the sink and seal the cap with tape before placing the disposal container into the garbage. Use heavy duty tape. Be sure to keep all containers with discarded sharps out of reach of children and pets.

We recommend you place any soiled bandages, disposable sheets and medical gloves separately in securely fastened plastic bags before placing them along with your other trash.



For more information, contact the Department of Health, Office of Solid Waste Management, 919 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 212, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814. Phone: (808) 586-4240. Fax: (808) 586-7509.