

Sharps Safety Tips



A sharps injury is a serious problem, but it is often preventable. Employees are strongly encouraged to take the following precautions as they relate to sharps (e.g., syringes, scalpel blades, glass, etc.).

Always dispose of sharps properly.

- Employees who use sharps in the workplace for personal reasons must always dispose of sharps materials properly, in an approved red sharps container, which has a lid that can be sealed to prevent sharps inside from falling out or being removed.
- Lake County's Department of Public Safety has a sharps program for people who can not afford to purchase sharps disposal container from an area pharmacy. This program also covers proper disposal procedures. For more information, visit http://www.lakecountyfl.gov/pdfs/Public_Safety/sharps_safety_brochure.pdf.
- When disposing of garbage, never place your hands or any other part of your body inside the trash (e.g., to push down the trash).
- Use caution when handling trash. Handle trash as though it contains sharps. When emptying trash receptacles, visually inspect them for evidence of protruding sharps. Take the garbage bag out from the top, and do not walk with it against your leg. Do not step on or push down garbage with your feet or hands. A loose syringe in a garbage bag may cause a needle stick injury to an individual.
- If a discarded syringe is found, NEVER use hands to pick up the syringe. Wear puncture-resistant gloves or use a thick cloth or a mechanical device to pick up the syringe. Hold the needle tip away from you and do not attempt to place the cap back on.
- Put the syringe in a puncture-proof container until such time when it can be disposed of properly in an approved red sharps container. Once the item has been placed in the approved red sharps container, it may then be disposed of in the regular garbage. Under no circumstances should the sharps be placed in the regular garbage if it has not been first placed in the red sharps container. Do not place in a recycle box.
- Should an employee experience a needle stick, follow [the usual steps](#) (Workers' Compensation reports and procedures) for an on-the-job injury or illness. Accidental needle sticks may expose employees to bloodborne pathogens such as HIV, Hepatitis, etc.