

Proper Disposal of Sharps

Sharps consist of **syringe/needles, razor blades, glass slides, scalpel blades, etc.** The following guidelines apply to all persons who generate sharps at UNCW.

- Use only containers designed for medical sharps when used with biohazard classified materials.
(I.e. human blood & body fluids, any infectious biological agents, etc.).

These containers should have locking lids that can be snapped shut when full and be labeled with the international biohazard symbol as shown below:



- EH&S must approve any other containers not manufactured for the purpose of sharps disposal on a case by case basis. Ad-Hoc containers used for sharps without EH&S approval will not be picked up.
- Prior to placing a sharps container into service, ensure that the lid is firmly in place and secured.
(An unsecured lid can become a booby trap for the next person who may pick it up)
- Do not overfill the container. Fill only to the top of the lower section of the container.
- Place entire (disposable) syringe/needle assy. into containers. If you must recap needles use one handed technique. Do not bend or shear needles.
(Less handling means less chance of a stick)
- Place containers in locations where they are readily available for use yet unlikely to be knocked over or fall and at a level whereby one does not have to manipulate the container to deposit a sharps item.
- Needles, and other metal sharps should not be mixed with broken glassware. However, medical (human use) glass slides should be deposited in approved sharps containers.
- When full, ensure top opening is snapped shut. These containers are designed to prevent reopening once snapped shut. Tape (around container) over the opening to ensure contents cannot spill if dropped. This also serves as a reminder that container should not be used further.
- Call EH&S for pickups or questions. **962-7892, 962-3057.**

In closing, please note that although not all sharps are infectious they are handled by EH&S in the same manner as a biohazard and are disposed of through the biohazard waste stream. Remember to report any needle sticks or cuts due to a sharp, no matter how minor, to EH&S. We thank you for your consideration in making our job safe as well as your own.