What’s the problem?

Proper handling and disposal of needles, lancets, and syringes (sharps) is vital to ensure the safety of yourself and others. Mishandling of sharps can lead to injury and disease transmission, of which more information can be found at the websites listed below. **NEVER place loose sharps in the trash or recycling.** This puts your family members and workers collecting and sorting the material at risk. If you use sharps in your home, please be mindful of where you place your used sharps and have a safe disposal method.

More information can be found at:

- [www.pco.state.mn.us/hhw](http://www.pco.state.mn.us/hhw)
- [www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us)
- [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)
- [www.mnaidsproject.org](http://www.mnaidsproject.org)

### Safe Storage and Disposal:

- **Purchase a sharps disposal container** from a pharmacy. If you bring used sharps to a clinic, hospital, or pharmacy, be sure to follow their requirements - which usually include a sharps container.
- **A needle incinerator** is a device used at home to melt needles at high heat and reform them into small pellets that can be disposed of in the garbage.
- **A needle cutter** is a device that cuts and stores needles after use. The clipped needles stored in the device must be disposed of at a sharps collection site or through a mail-back program.
- **LEGAL BUT LESS SAFE** - Store used sharps in an empty laundry detergent bottle with a screw on lid. Only fill the bottle half-way with sharps, then secure the lid with sturdy tape and clearly label the bottle with “DO NOT RECYCLE: HOUSEHOLD SHARPS”. This bottle can then be placed in a trash bin.

### Other Disposal Options

- Some clinics, hospitals, and pharmacies have sharps collection programs. Please check with your healthcare provider for more information and be sure to follow their disposal guidelines.
- **Mail-back programs** are a fee-based service that allow sharps users to return used sharps to licensed disposal facilities through the mail. Please check with your healthcare provider, pharmacist, or search “sharps mail-back” online.