LA CROSSE COUNTY
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Proper Sharps Management

The La Crosse County Household Hazardous Materials Facility accepts containerized sharps including needles, syringes, auto-injectors (EpiPens) and lancets. There is no disposal fee for La Crosse County residential customers. A small disposal fee applies to out-of-county residential customers and businesses.

Follow these six steps to prepare medical sharps for safe disposal:

1. Clip needle points or recap/re-sheathe discarded sharps to help prevent needle sticks. Recapping needles is prohibited in healthcare facilities because medical workers might stick themselves with contaminated needles, but individuals who administer their own medications are not at risk from their own needles.

2. Place sharps in hard, puncture-resistant containers with secure lids or caps. Commercially available sharps containers and thick-walled plastic detergent or bleach bottles with screw caps are acceptable. Unacceptable containers include coffee cans (the lids are too easily punctured), plastic milk jugs, plastic bags, aluminum cans and soda bottles.

3. Refrain from adding bleach to the container. Bleach may not completely disinfect needles and it could spill and injure you or waste handlers.

4. Do not commingle sharps with any other waste, including medications.

5. Visibly label the sharps container with the word "SHARPS" or with the bio-hazard emblem. If you place sharps in a container that would otherwise be recyclable, label it "Do not recycle."

6. When the container is full, sealed and labeled, store it safely and dispose of it properly at a sharps collection station. A list of area sharps collection stations can be found on the Alliance to HEAL website.

