INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN NO. 97-08

HOW TO DISPOSE OF USED NEEDLES AND SYRINGES AT HOME

HANDLE WITH CARE

Background: People with diabetes and other medical conditions must use syringes, needles and lancets every day to control their condition and stay healthy. Also individuals who own pets or reside on farms or ranches vaccinate and treat their animals to keep them free from illness. After the syringes, needles and lancets (sharps) are used they need to be disposed of properly. Improper disposal of used sharps can injure children, sanitation workers, and pets through accidental "sticks". These sharps can be contaminated with hepatitis, HIV and other infectious diseases. The spread of these diseases can be lessened by ensuring that the other sharps do not end up in places like streets, parks or playgrounds.

Method of Proper Disposal: Dispose of syringes, needles and lancets (sharps) at our Mobile Household Hazardous Waste Collection events. These services are available to Riverside County residents only. Place sharps in a rigid–plastic biohazardous sharps container provided by the County or purchased at a pharmacy. When your sharps container is ¾ full, exchange it for a new one at one of our Mobile Household Hazardous Waste Collection events. Some sharps containers are available to Riverside County residents at these events at no charge, while supplies last. For a schedule go to our website: http://www.rivcowm.org/hhw_schedule.htm

Sharps collection safety tips:

- Do not use glass containers to collect sharps (they can break).
- Do not put sharps containers in your trash or recycling bin.
- Do not throw loose needles or lancets into the trash or recycling bin.
- Do not flush needles or lancets down the toilet.

If you have any questions regarding the disposal of syringes and needles, please contact our Riverside office at (951) 955-8982.

*Document available in an alternate format upon request