



SHARPS DISPOSAL – g109 August 2010

SITUATION

“Sharps” is the common name for discarded syringes with needles attached. Sharps are a health and safety issue to both the public and Council staff. Sharps can be encountered by Council staff whilst carrying out their daily duties servicing parks, public toilets or bins to name a few.

The risk of removing and disposing of sharps can be reduced if performed properly.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

All personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided free of charge to the staff member. It is the staff member’s responsibility to maintain the PPE in a clean and serviceable condition and to use it as directed. PPE will be replaced by Council when it is beyond a safe-to-use condition.

- **Safety Vests** or safety shirts must be worn at all times while working.
- **Safety Boots** must be worn at all times while working.
- **Sun Protection** including but not limited to wide brimmed hats must be used to protect the skin from the sun.
- **Disposable Vinyl Gloves** must be worn while collecting sharps.
- **Tongs** must be used to collect discarded syringes and other sharps, and to place these into the approved sharps containers.
- **Sharps Containers** are available from Council’s Store. Filled containers are to be handed in at Council’s Store in the Depot.

INSTRUCTIONS

Collection

1. Wear Disposable Vinyl Gloves – **not leather or other thick gloves**.
2. **Do not** handle the syringe with hands even though you are wearing gloves.
3. Take the Sharps Container to the syringe.
4. Open the Sharps Container and place it on firm solid ground. **Do not** hold the Sharps Container.
5. Use the tongs in a single-handed operation to pick up the syringe.
6. Place the syringe point first into the Sharps Container.
7. Do not bend needles.
8. Seal the sharps container lid closed on completion.

Disposal

8. Do not overload a Sharps Container.
9. The container should be secured in the vehicle and must not be allowed to move around. The sharps container must not be in the cabin of the vehicle.
10. Loaded containers are to be sealed off and deposited in the Store at the Depot on a daily basis where possible.

First Aid

If you receive a needle stick, follow this procedure:

11. Encourage bleeding from the wound straight away by squeezing.
12. Wash the wound clean with soap under running water as soon as possible.

Continued

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INSTRUCTIONS

First Aid, continued.

13. Apply a sterile dressing to the wound.
14. Report the needle stick to your immediate supervisor.
15. Seek medical advice for clinical assessment and blood tests.
16. Note: As blood test results will take up to 3 months, you should request from your doctor advice about potentially infectious viruses and safe practices, eg. safe sex.
17. Further advice and/or counselling is available through Council's Human Resources Section.

End

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

The employee's obligation in relation to Section 20 of the OHS Act 2000 in part states:

1. An employee must, while at work, take reasonable care for the health and safety of people who are at the employee's place of work and who may be affected by the employee's acts or omissions at work.
2. An employee must, while at work, co-operate with his or her employer or other person so far as is necessary to enable compliance with any requirement under this Act or the regulations that is imposed in the interests of health, safety and welfare on the employer or any other person.