

# MEDICAL SHARPS AND RECYCLING: **THEY JUST DON'T MIX**

If there is one item you should never include in your recycling bin, it is home-generated medical waste, especially sharps. Be sure to remember that there are people employed at recycling centers, hired to sort or handle the recyclables you place in your bin at your home or workplace.

Including sharps (used or unused) or other home-generated medical waste in your recycling bins creates a health risk to those working at the facility. Be respectful of recycling facilities and their workers. It is recommended that you try to find a local household hazardous waste program, ask your personal physician, local hospital, or fire/EMS station if they would be willing to take them.

## WHAT ARE HOME-GENERATED SHARPS AND WHAT'S THE RISK?

"Sharps" include needles, syringes, and lancets used for checking blood glucose levels. People at the greatest risk of suffering a needle stick injury include recycling facility staff, sanitation and sewage treatment plant workers, janitors, housekeepers, and children.

Sharps are used to treat:

- Allergies
- Cancer
- Erectile Dysfunction
- HIV/AIDS
- Migraines
- Osteoporosis
- Arthritis
- Diabetes
- Hepatitis
- Infertility
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Psoriasis

Needle stick injury victims suffer anxiety, depression, disease monitoring, and possible long-term infectious disease treatment.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:

**Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE)**

[Michigan.gov/EGLEMedWaste](https://Michigan.gov/EGLEMedWaste)

'Sharps Disposal Programs for Michigan Residents' and 'The Point is.... Needles Hurt!' brochure.

**Environmental Protection Agency**

[EPA.gov/RCRA/Medical-Waste#Sharps](https://EPA.gov/RCRA/Medical-Waste#Sharps)

Resources and helpful links for home-generated sharps

**Food and Drug Administration**

[FDA.gov/medical-devices/consumer-products/safely-using-sharps-needles-and-syringes-home-work-and-travel](https://FDA.gov/medical-devices/consumer-products/safely-using-sharps-needles-and-syringes-home-work-and-travel)

Resources and helpful links for home-generated sharps

**Safe Needle Disposal**

[SafeNeedleDisposal.org/FAQ](https://SafeNeedleDisposal.org/FAQ)

National organizational website devoted to safe needle disposal for residents

**FOR ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE, CONTACT THE EGLE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSISTANCE CENTER AT 800-662-9278**

**EGLE** MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY

800-662-9278 | [Michigan.gov/EGLEMedWaste](https://Michigan.gov/EGLEMedWaste)

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