



MEDICAL SHARPS/NEEDLE DISPOSAL

Medical sharps are used in many homes to administer medications, such as allergy shots and insulin, and to monitor physical states such as blood sugar levels. It is illegal for medical sharps, such as disposable hypodermic syringes and lancets to be thrown in trash or recycling containers. The improper disposal of used needles, lancets, and medical sharps can injure children, home health care providers, sanitation workers and pets through accidental "sticks". Needles can be contaminated with hepatitis, or other communicable infections. Sharps **cannot** be placed in trash or recycling carts. They have to be disposed properly.

There are convenient ways of properly disposing medical sharps. They include:

1. The Gaffey SAFE Center, **1400 N. Gaffey Street** (by the railroad tracks, across the street from the DMV office), in San Pedro accepts sharps (in addition to household hazardous waste and electronics waste), free of charge. The center is open to LA County residents every Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Place the sharps in special secure containers to avoid accidental "sticks" while handling. For more information call 1-800-988-6942, or for direction/map click the link below: <http://www.palosverdes.com/rpv/publicworks/content/SAFE-drop-center.pdf>
2. The State of California- Health and Human Services Agency has a list of mail-back services that are approved by the Department of Public Health. Click on the link below: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/medicalwaste/Documents/MedicalWaste/SharpsMailBackList.pdf>
3. Check the State of California- Cal Recycles household hazardous waste- medical waste disposal site at: <http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/HomeHazWaste/Sharps/>
4. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for other convenient options and programs.

Updated October 2010