

Needles and the Law

According to state law 105 CMR 480, it is illegal to dispose of sharps, as well as unopened packages of hypodermic needles and lancets, by throwing them away in the trash.

The City of Worcester Revised Ordinances Chapter 4 Section 6 prohibits all sharp objects, including syringes, from being placed in a yellow City of Worcester trash bag or recycle bin for disposal, as it may endanger the person picking up the bag.

Violating the above ordinance can result in a \$25 fine.



What Do I Do If I Find a Loose Needle?

Loose sharps are dangerous. They can harbor illness and disease, which can be passed along if someone is stuck. Follow these simple steps to make sure that you and your family are safe.

- ❖ **DON'T** – Attempt to pick up the sharp yourself! This could result in being stuck.
- ❖ **DON'T** – Throw the needle in the trash, even in public waste containers.
- ❖ **DON'T** – Walk close to the needle with open-toed or soft shoes.
- ❖ **DO** – Report loose needles to the City of Worcester’s Customer Service Line at:

(508)-929-1300
- ❖ **DO** – If possible, give an exact location and detailed description of where you found the needle.
- ❖ **DO** – If reporting on the weekend or during off hours, leave a message. Your call will be logged and someone will be sent to address the issue as soon as possible.
- ❖ **DO** – Provide friends and neighbors with this information so we can work together to keep our city safe!

Safe and Easy Needle Disposal

Designated Sharps Kiosks

Designated sharps kiosks are the best places to dispose of sharps. They are marked with the universal biohazard warning symbol. Worcester has designated kiosks at the following locations:

- ❖ Worcester Senior Center, 128 Providence Street
- ❖ Family Health Center, 26 Queen Street
- ❖ AIDS Project Worcester, 85 Green Street
- ❖ Edward M. Kennedy Health, 19 Tacoma Street
- ❖ Ethiopian Dream Center, 18 Millbury Street
- ❖ Worcester Division of Public Health, 25 Meade Street



Household Hazardous Waste Day

Twice per year, you may make an appointment to bring your sharps to Household Hazardous Waste Day, held at the City’s Residential Drop Off Center (1065 Millbury Street). You must seal all sharps in puncture proof containers (such as laundry detergent bottle, sealed coffee can, etc.) Find out the next disposal date by calling 508-929-1300.

How to Store Used Needles

In order to be dropped off at a disposal site, needles must be placed in a **sealed / taped shut, rigid, puncture proof, leak proof container**. No glass containers or plastic bags will be accepted.

Good examples of household containers you can reuse for needles disposal are: laundry detergent bottles, sealed coffee cans, etc.



Using needle clippers is an easy way to reduce sticks! Needle clippers are available to Worcester residents for **FREE** on a first come first serve basis.

To request a needle clipping device call:
Worcester Division of Public Health
(508) 799-8531

To ask about options available to seniors call:
Worcester Senior Center (508) 799-1232



How to Report a Found Needle

If you find a loose needle, please report it!
Here's how:

- ❖ Call DPW Customer Service Center at: **(508) 929-1300**. If it is outside of business hours, please leave a message.
- ❖ Staff from the Department of Inspectional Services will then retrieve the reported needle.

Please do not place used needles in prescription drug kiosks. Used needles should **ONLY** go in designated needle containers marked with the universal biohazard warning symbol.



What Should I Do If I get Stuck by a Needle?

- ❖ Wash the area with soap and hot water; **DO NOT** add disinfectant or bleach.
- ❖ Get a medical exam within 24 hours (go to the emergency room if your doctor's office is closed).
- ❖ **DO NOT** bring the syringe with you.
- ❖ **DO** report the syringe to the DPW customer service line: **508-929-1300**.

City of Worcester Division of Public Health



Needle Safety & Disposal



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