



## More Information About Sharps & Pharmaceutical Waste

# Home Generated Medical Waste

### What if I am collecting sharps for family & friends?

The law allows, in certain situations for a person or a business to lawfully collect and manage sharps waste. In some cases there are permits and fees, and in others there may be an exemption. To know the facts about whether or not you can collect these materials for disposal, contact the Yolo County Environmental Health Department at 530-666-8646.

If you are collecting less than 220 lbs per month, you would be classified as a Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator (CESQG). You may choose which of the four methods of disposal you prefer (listed on the inside of this brochure). If you are a CESQG and choose to dispose of your waste at the Hazardous Waste Collection Facility, you will have to pay a nominal application fee and disposal costs. You will also be required to make an appointment by calling 1-800-207-8222.



**Consider this:** “the United State Geological Survey conducted a study in 2002 sampling 139 streams across 30 states and found that 80% had measurable concentrations of prescription and nonprescription drugs, steroids, and reproductive hormones (like birth control).” and “Exposure, even to low levels of these drugs, has been shown to have negative effects on fish and other aquatic species.”

That is a direct quote from Senate Bill 966 which was approved by the Governor and signed into California law in October 2007. The law requires the State to create a model plan for the safe management and disposal of home generated pharmaceutical waste.

Until a complete plan is in place, the same methods of proper disposal that you can use for home generated sharps can also apply to pharmaceutical waste.

To properly dispose of sharps, they should be placed in “Acceptable containers” that are puncture-proof and breakage resistant for the safety of residents and personnel at the consolidation point. A rigid container like a detergent bottle or bleach bottle are acceptable containers. The lids should be taped shut and the word “sharps” written on the container. A red biohazard container purchased for sharps collection purpose are acceptable containers also for bringing them for proper disposal.



**HINT:** To ensure your privacy, make sure to remove your personal information from labels before disposal.



What you need to know about the proper management and disposal of your home generated sharps and

Yolo County  
Planning and Public Works  
Division of Integrated Waste Management



# The Facts About Home Generated Medical Waste

## DEFINITIONS:

**Sharps:** needles, lancets, and other devices used to penetrate or puncture the skin for the delivery of medication.

**Pharmaceuticals:** Drug or medicine that is prepared or dispensed in pharmacies and used in medical treatment.

In recent history, home generated medical wastes have become a major issue for the waste industry. Because of the concern for blood borne diseases, and other contamination issues medical wastes had to be managed under very strict guidelines. This made it difficult for people to properly manage and dispose of their home generated medical waste. Now, thanks to Senate Bills 1305 and 966, it just got a little easier for residents to properly manage and dispose of their home generated sharps safely. Throughout this brochure, we will discuss the facts and disposal options further.

## FACTS:

- As of **September 1, 2008** home generated sharps can no longer go into any trash, recycling or other waste receptacle.
- It is illegal to throw sharps or pharmaceuticals in the trash, toilet or sink.



## How do I manage my home generated Medical Waste?

You must contain your home generated sharps in a red biohazard container or in a rigid, puncture proof container with the word "sharps" written on the container. Sharps and pharmaceutical wastes can not be thrown in the trash, recycling or green waste containers. They can not be disposed of in the toilet, sink or other water-way either. Once you are ready to take your home generated medical waste for disposal, make sure you know where to take them.

## The Four Methods of Proper Disposal



1. **Medical Generator Facility** - This is your healthcare provider, or other medical facility that is already generating this waste. This would be the best and safest way to manage your home generated medical waste, as medical facilities are better equipped to manage these materials. Please discuss this option with your doctor to see if services exist.



2. **Consolidation Point** - Some pharmacies have begun to offer take back programs as a consolidation point, but there could be any number of acceptable consolidation points in your community. Some examples are doctor's office, local health and social services designated consolidation point, even your veterinarian's office. (See reverse side for locations)



3. **Mail Back Program**- Some cities, pharmacies, doctor's offices and other programs offer mail-back boxes. These boxes allow you to box and ship home generated medical waste back to a manufacturer, or treatment facility. It is very easy and convenient, but there is usually a cost associated with it.



4. **Household Hazardous Waste Facility** - Home generated medical wastes can be collected and properly disposed of through your local household hazardous waste collection program. This option is easily accessible and usually free. (See opposite page for Yolo County HHW location)

The Yolo County Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility (HHW) will accept your home generated sharps and non-controlled pharmaceuticals at no charge. Controlled pharmaceuticals such as illegal drugs, morphine, codeine, etc. must be taken to a local police station for authorized disposal.

**Yolo County offers HHW Collection EVERY Friday and Saturday.** Residents can bring their sharps and pharmaceutical waste to this collection site to dispose of them properly. If you do choose to bring sharps to the HHW facility, please make sure to notify the attendant that you have them.



## Yolo County Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility

Yolo County  
Planning and Public Works  
Division of Integrated Waste Management

44090 County Road 28H  
Woodland, CA 95776  
530-666-8856

[www.yolocounty.org](http://www.yolocounty.org)