



County of Yolo

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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New Law Makes Disposal of Sharps in the Landfill Illegal

Woodland, CA—Starting on September 1, 2008, it is now illegal to dispose of sharps or syringes generated at home in the garbage. Previously, sharps and syringes from home injections and other uses could be put in a thick plastic container like a sharps container, coffee containers or bleach bottles, taped and put in the garbage. This is no longer the case.

Now sharps must be disposed of through an approved waste management system. In Yolo County they can be dropped off, in a red sharps biohazard container, at the Household Hazardous Waste drop-off days at the landfill, located at 44090 County Road 28H in Woodland. The drop-off days in 2008 are as follows: September 12 and 13, October 17 and 18, November 14 and 15, and December 12 and 13.

“This is a significant change in disposal requirements that will take time to properly educate the public,” states Linda Sinderson, Deputy Director of the Division of Integrated Waste Management. “To help our residents find where they can drop off sharps, the County has added sharps disposal information to their resource phone line and will continually add information as it becomes available.” The phone number is: (530) 666-8729.

The law was passed partially to protect recycling and landfill employees from being stuck by a needle, and potentially becoming sick. “Preventing needle sticks is important for the public’s health,” states Dr. Bette Hinton, Yolo County Health Officer and Director. “We want to encourage people who use sharps at home to dispose of them through an approved system.”

To expand the location options for disposal, the Integrated Waste Management Division of the Planning and Public Works Department and the Health Department have started a task force to develop additional options for the community.

Additional information about the change in the law, and other resources for disposal of home generated sharps can be found on the California Waste Management Board website at <http://ww2.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/medicalwaste/Pages/HomeGeneratedMedWaste.aspx>.

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