



August 28, 2008

Home-Generated Sharps Ban

BACKGROUND

It is estimated that nearly 400 million sharps are disposed of in California each year. In the past, it was legally acceptable to dispose of home-generated sharps with ordinary garbage. However, the presence of these devices in household garbage pose a potential health and safety risk to waste management workers. In 2006, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Senate Bill 1305, prohibiting the disposal of these sharps in the municipal solid waste stream.

BASICS OF THE LAW

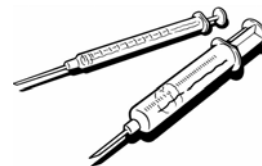
The law regarding home-generated sharps takes effect on September 1, 2008 (HSC §118286):

- Makes it illegal for any person to place sharps in any container used for garbage, recyclable materials, or greenwaste, including roll-off containers.
- Specifies that sharps must be transported in a sharps container. *These containers can be purchased at drug stores and medical supply stores.*

DEFINITION OF SHARPS

The term "home-generated sharps waste" means "devices that are used to penetrate the skin for the delivery of medications" (HSC §117671). According to the regulations, these devices include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Hypodermic or pen needles (syringes)
- Intravenous needles
- Lancets



DISPOSAL OPTIONS

For Calaveras County residents, sharps disposal options include:

1) Use a mail-back service or a medical facility take-back program

This option is strongly encouraged because it:

- Reduces the handling of sharps
- Minimizes costs
- Limits the potential for accidental exposures and injuries

Services may be found using an internet search for "needle disposal"

2) Take to Rock Creek Toxics Facility in Milton

This facility is open 7 days a week from 8:00am - 4:30pm

3) Take to an annual Toxics Collection Event at various locations in the County

See the County's *Recycling Guide* for dates and locations or visit www.CalaverasRecycles.org

For further questions, please call (209) 754-6403

