

## EHS Guide: Requirements for Sharps Disposal

### A. Definition of Sharps

Any object which could readily puncture or cut the skin of an individual when encountered.

- A Sharp May Be Any Type of Material
  - Glass or plastic pipettes and pipette tips.
  - Needles, syringes, knives, razor blades, metal shavings, etc.
  - Any broken glass, plastic, metal, pottery with sharp edges, etc.
  - Anything that could puncture through a garbage bag risking the bag to rupture and spill, or risking unexpected injury and exposure to custodial or cleanup personnel.

### B. Disposal Requirements

Must be disposed per the **KU Hazardous Materials/Waste Management Manual**.

- Basic Packaging and Container Requirements
  - Some type of impermeable container is required for collecting and disposal of sharps. The common glass disposal boxes are considered sharps boxes for non-infectious sharps.
  - For medical or biological contaminated sharps, autoclavable containers are generally used.
  - For other radiation or chemical contaminated sharps, containers are dictated by disposal methods and protocols.
  - For non-contaminated sharps, containers are selected based on lab protocols and resources.
- Non-Contaminated Sharps
  - Non-Contaminated Sharps are a type of normal solid waste that is not specifically regulated for disposal, but require additional packaging and safety precautions prior to disposal.
    - Disposal requirements found in **Section 1.5.1.4**.
- Contaminated Sharps
  - Contaminated sharps require special disposal as either regulated or hazardous waste.
  - **Radioisotope** contamination requires disposal through EHS.
    - Disposal requirements may be found in **Sections 4.5 through 4.9**.
    - For assistance, contact EHS Radiation Safety Services – 864-2851
  - **Biological/Infectious** contamination requires decontamination prior to final disposal.
    - Disposal requirements may be found in **Sections 3.5 through 3.7**.
    - For assistance, contact EHS Biosafety Services – 864-2857
  - **Chemical** contamination requires disposal through EHS.
    - Disposal requirements may be found in **Sections 2.6 through 2.8**.
    - For assistance, contact EHS Hazardous Materials Service – 864-2853

### C. Bloodborne Pathogens Program

Applies only to items that have come in contact with human blood, tissues, fluids, etc.

- See **KU Bloodborne Pathogens Program** for details.

### D. Additional KU Lab Safety Manual (LSM) References Regarding Sharps

See **Lab Safety Manual Sections** for details:

- LSM Part 1 - 2.5.3.5 Practice Good Housekeeping.
- LSM Part 1 - 2.5.3.6 Dispose of all sharp objects in an EHS-approved container.
- LSM Part 1 - 6.2.1.4 Never place Non-Contaminated Sharps into normal trash receptacles unless properly packaged. (See referenced web page for details.)
- LSM Part 3 - 2.1.1.2 Special comments concerning “sharps” usage and disposal.