

Medical Waste Information

After medical wastes washed up on several East Coast beaches, concern over the potential health hazards prompted Congress to enact the Medical Waste Tracking Act (MWTA) of 1988. Specifically, this act amended the Solid Waste Disposal Act.

Household generated medical waste INCLUDING SHARPS CAN NOT BE RECYCLED. If you are not using a red SHARP container, then a #2 milk jug or detergent bottle can be used (Although a red SHARP container is recommended) When full use packaging or duct tape to secure the top, mark HOUSEHOLD GENERATED MEDICAL WASTE and drop off at a collection point. DO NOT PLACE IN RECYCLING CONTAINER.

Medical waste is all waste materials generated at health care facilities, laboratories and for personal use in households. The law defines it as "any solid waste that is generated in the diagnosis, treatment, or immunization of human beings or animals, in research pertaining thereto, or in the production or testing of biologicals."

This definition includes, but is not limited to:

- blood-soaked bandages
- culture dishes and other glassware
- discarded surgical gloves
- discarded surgical instruments
- discarded needles used to give shots or draw blood (e.g., [medical sharps](#))
- cultures, stocks, swabs used to inoculate cultures
- discarded lancets¹

SHARPS Calendar

Home generated medical waste is only a small fraction of Ulster County's waste stream but represents a large potential danger to residents and small children. Sharps – needles, syringes, lancets, and other sharp materials that come in contact with human blood or other body fluid – should be disposed of properly. Hospitals and other health care facilities, which generate medical waste, are strictly regulated, however, residents are not.

To assure there are safe places for residents to bring "SHARPS" all Article 28 Health Care Facilities in New York are required by law to accept medical waste from residents in appropriate, puncture-proof containers. In Ulster County, the health facilities have coordinated a pre-scheduled collection program.

1. Sharps should be stored in an approved, puncture-proof container, which can be purchased from local pharmacies or retail stores in Ulster County. You can also pick one up on a pre-scheduled collection day at area hospitals and nursing homes while supplies are available.
2. Place needles and syringes into SHARPS containers. You **do not** need to recap or break needles.
3. When containers are full, close the lid securely and bring to a designated SHARPS drop-off facility on a pre-scheduled collection day. Please be sure the outside of the container is clean.
4. After dropping off a filled container, you may receive a new one if supplies are available.²

SHARPS Drop Off Sites

Health Alliance (formerly Benedictine Hospital): Outpatient lab entrance on west side: housekeeping: 105 Mary's Ave., Kingston, NY 338-2500 ext 4243

Ellenville Regional Hospital: Reception desk, Ask for Infection Control, 10 Healthy Way, Ellenville, NY 647-6400

Golden Hill Nursing and Rehabilitation Center: Main entrance: ask for housekeeping; Golden Hill Drive, Kingston, NY 340-3390

The Mountain View Nursing and Rehabilitation Centre: Reception desk; 1 Jansen Road, New Paltz, NY 255-0830

Hudson Valley Rehabilitation and Care Center: Reception desk in lobby; 260 Vineyard Ave, Highland, NY 691-7201

Kingston Ambulatory Surgical Center (Hurley Ave. Surgical): Reception area located in the basement; 40 Hurley Ave, Kingston, NY 338-4777

Health Alliance (formerly Kingston Hospital): Main entrance at Emergency Dept. entrance in back of hospital; Kingston, NY 331-3131 x 2287

Northeast Center for Special Care: Reception area, ask for Infection Control; 300 Grant Ave, Lake Katrine, NY 336-3500

Ten Broeck Commons: Employees backdoor entrance: 1 Commons Dr., Lake Katrine, NY 336-6666

Wingate at Ulster: Reception desk in lobby; 1 Wingate Way off Route 9W, Highland, NY 691-6800

(See www.newpaltzreuse.org resource page for more information or call UCRRA at (845) 336-0600)

¹ EPA Medical Waste Act

² UCRRA SHARPS program



Unwanted Medications

There is no easy answer to the disposal of unwanted medications. Discarding them in the trash can increase the risk of unauthorized use, while flushing down the toilet can contaminate the water supply. Visit the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's [Drugs in New York Waters](#) website for information about why flushing your drugs is harmful.

You can take advantage of a [drug take-back program](#), being offered at local police stations, government events, and via mail-back. *(Information on pre-paid packages for mail back programs are available on their websites or stop by and asked the pharmacist for more details.)*

Ulster County Law Enforcement Center
Route 32, Kingston, NY (845) 338-3640

New Paltz Police
So Putt Corners Rd, New Paltz, NY (845) 257-7112

Most prescription drugs can be mixed with an undesirable substance (such as used coffee grounds or kitty litter) and put in impermeable, non-descript containers (such as empty cans or sealable bags) marked "not recyclable - disposal only" before discarding them in the trash. For information on radioactive medication, check with the Ulster County Health Department at (845) 340-3070

Other Household Medical Materials

The State of New York does not consider medical waste (e.g., sharps, IV bags, catheter tubing, etc.) generated in the home to be included in the definition of Regulated Medical Waste (RMW). Use securely tied bags to dispose of soiled bandages, disposable sheets, medical gloves, tubing, and intravenous (IV) materials in the trash. These suggestions are made to prevent public exposure from RMW generated in the home (e.g., needle-stick incidents, spilled fluid containers, etc.). **Biohazards (Medical Waste) are not recyclable and should not be discarded with your plastics and glass.**

See [mercury containing devices](#) on NYSDEC website for information concerning the safe handling and disposal of mercury thermometers.



Information for the creation of this educational brochure was taken from:

NYC.gov Earth 911
NYSDEC UCRRA EPA websites.

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MEDICAL WASTE HANDLING & DISPOSAL INFORMATION



Education

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