Working with Sharps

Careful handling of sharps will prevent injury and reduce the risk of infection. An accident or injury involving a sharp contaminated with human blood or other infectious material may result in an individual being infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), or other pathogens.

SAFE DISPOSAL OF SHARPS

- Used sharps must be discarded immediately into sharps containers.
- Sharps containers must be kept upright.
- Never reach into a sharps disposal container or broken glass box.
- Sharps containers must be easily located in the immediate area where sharps are used.
- Never overfill sharps containers past the pre-marked “fill-line”.
- Close and lock lid when moving sharps containers from the area of use.
- Puncture-resistant sharps containers are provided by Safety and Risk.
- When full, sharps containers may be autoclaved and then picked up by Safety and Risk Management (SRM). [http://www.montana.edu/srm/forms/waste/](http://www.montana.edu/srm/forms/waste/)
- SRM will also replace sharps containers by request.

PROPER HANDLING OF NEEDLES AND RAZOR BLADES

- Never bend, break, or shear needles.
- Never remove needles from syringe barrels.
- Never recap needles after using.

*Recapping is permissible if it can be demonstrated to the Biosafety officer and SRM that no alternative is feasible or that such an action is required by a specific procedure.*

RESPONDING TO NEEDLE STICKS

1. Expose the wound.
2. Express blood from the wound.
3. Flush wound for 5 minutes.
4. Cover wound.
5. Report incident to your supervisor.
7. Report incident to the Occupational Health Manager (Laurie Shute, SRM, 994-7384).

For more information or assistance, contact the MSU Biosafety Office: Ryan Bartlett, ryan.bartlett@montana.edu, (406) 994-6733.