

# Sharps Containers

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What are sharps?**

Sharps refers to any medical item used in health care which has sharp points or cutting edges capable of causing injury to, or to pierce human skin, when handled. Examples include: hypodermic needles, scalpels, lancets, razor blades, scissors, metal wire, retractors, clamps, pins, staples, cutters, and glass items.

### **How should I handle sharps?**

Only trained staff should handle sharps. If a sharp is found on PCC property, contact Public Safety for assistance.

### **If I need to dispose of a single item classified as a sharp, why can't I just throw it in the trash?**

Needlesticks and other injuries associated with mishandling sharps are a serious recognized threat to PCC's Custodial team. Custodians can easily suffer a sharps injury by sorting through trash or even simply walking with a bag of trash in their hands.

### **Where are sharps containers located at PCC?**

Sharps containers are located in those area where there is a recognized occupational exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials. This can include laboratories in the Health Professions or Life Sciences programs, Child Care and Physical Education. Additionally, Public Safety and Facilities Management Services (Grounds & Custodial), typically have access to sharps containers used for picking up stray sharps that were improperly discarded.

### **I was at another college and they had used needle containers in the restroom. Does PCC have any of these?**

PCC does not provide sharps disposal containers in restrooms at this time.

### **Where can obtain additional information and resources about sharps?**

PCC's written Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan can be found in Chapter 14 of the Health & Safety Manual on the EH&S webpage. Additionally, Oregon OSHA has a wealth of information on sharps in their *Bloodborne Pathogens* standard 1910.1030 and *Additional Oregon Rules for Bloodborne Pathogens* 437-002-1030.