

Sharps – Other

Frequently Asked Questions

Other than needles and other medical instruments, what items can be considered “sharps”?

PCC considers items like broken glass, razor blades, scrap metal, and electrical wire as other possible “sharps” that can be generated through academic or operational activities.

Our department will sometimes have broken glassware. How should we manage it?

Any department that might generate broken glass (science, art, etc.) should have broken glass boxes available. Broken glass boxes are constructed of thick cardboard with a thick plastic bag liner that resists punctures and cuts. Broken glass boxes are the department’s responsibility purchase and can be sourced from a variety of vendors. The size and quantity of boxes a department has should be determined by how much broken glass might be generated and where the box will be stored. No one should ever retrieve items from inside broken glass boxes.

How are broken glass boxes disposed of when they are full?

Most of the glassware used at PCC in labs or art courses cannot be recycled because of the type of glass used. This means that all broken glass boxes must be processed as general trash whenever they are full or no longer needed. Departments with full broken glass boxes must submit work orders through the Service Request Center (SRC) for Custodial to pick them up. Boxes ready for pick up must be fully taped shut to ensure no contents accidentally fall out during transportation.

What is the best way to manage disposable razor blades?

Departments that use disposable razor blades or other disposable cutting implements should use yellow sharps containers. Similar to red sharps containers for needles, yellow sharps containers must be constructed from durable, puncture resistant plastic with an opening that can be locked closed once it is full. No one should ever retrieve items from inside yellow sharps containers.

What should I do with full yellow sharps containers when they are full?

Disposable razor blades and other items that would go in yellow sharps containers are not classified as regulated waste. This means that full yellow sharps containers can be disposed of as general trash once they are fully sealed and none of the contents can fall out.

What is the best way to manage scrap metal and electrical wire?

Some departments might generate scrap metal or wire in the course of their work. These scraps can have extremely sharp edges and must be managed carefully to prevent injury. Individuals working with metal and wire must wear appropriate PPE at all times. Departments that generate scrap metal and wire should have specific containers that are puncture resistant to collect the scrap in. PCC has a few approved vendors for disposal of scrap metal and wire. If a department generates a large enough quantity, dedicated dumpsters can be used to collect the scrap metal and wire making it easier for vendor pick-up. No one should ever retrieve items from a scrap metal and wire container.

What should I do if my department has needles or other medical instruments?

Departments that generate needle sharps or use other sharp medical instruments can review the [Sharps – Needles FAQ](#) on the EH&S website.