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2. Reinforce the lid with heavy-duty tape, label **"Not Recyclable"** and place container in your regular trash. This will prevent a trash hauler from mistakenly routing the container for recycling.
  3. Contact a Medical Waste Disposal Service. A list is available at [www.michigan.gov/deq/waste](http://www.michigan.gov/deq/waste) (1 elect "Medical Waste").
  4. Finally, make sure that you keep all containers with sharp objects out of the reach of children and pets. It is also recommended that soiled bandages, disposable sheets, and medical gloves be placed in securely fastened plastic bags.

#### Other Resources

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency The potential environmental impacts of pharmaceuticals:  
[www.epa.gov/esd/chemistry/pharmaIndex.htm](http://www.epa.gov/esd/chemistry/pharmaIndex.htm)
- U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) - research on the presence of pharmaceuticals in the environment:  
<http://toxics.usgs.gov/regional/emc/>
- For more information on the proper disposal of home medical waste or other household hazardous waste, contact the Wayne County Resource Recovery Coordinator at 734-326-3936.



Land Resource Management Division 3600  
Commerce Ct., Bldg. E Wayne, MI 48184  
Phone: 734-326-3936 Fax: 734-326-4421 ·ooE  
24 Hour Hotline: 1-888-223-2363  
[www.waynecounty.com/doe/land](http://www.waynecounty.com/doe/land)



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## Disposal Tips for Home Medical Waste & Pharmaceuticals

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To protect your health and our environment.

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## Why Be Concerned About Medical Waste?

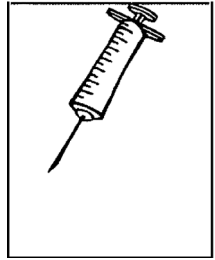
- The U.S. Government has found that 80% of watersheds contain low levels of at least one type of pharmaceutical chemical, with half of our streams containing seven or more.
- Wastewater treatment facilities can't filter these chemicals out, so many drugs are being detected in drinking water.
- The effects of most of these products are unknown, but increased concentrations of antibiotics in drinking water have produced "super bugs"; bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics.
- The risks of long-term exposure of these substances to humans and animals are unknown.
- Previous information campaigns encouraged consumers to "flush" excess pharmaceuticals, but these substances are now ending up in our drinking water.
- Unwanted medicine improperly disposed can be stolen and used, potentially resulting in death or illness.
- Improper disposal of used sharps can cause injury, illness, and pollution.

## Prescription Drugs

- The new Federal prescription drug disposal guidelines are designed to reduce the diversion of prescription drugs, while also protecting the environment. These guidelines urge Americans to:
  - Take unused, unneeded, or expired prescription drugs out of their original containers. Mix the prescription drugs with an undesirable substance, like used coffee grounds or kitty litter, and put them in impermeable, non-descript containers, such as empty cans or sealable bags, further ensuring that the drugs are not diverted or accidentally ingested by children or pets. Throw these containers in the trash.
  - contact your local pharmacy to see if they have a take-back program in place for unused, unneeded, or expired prescription drugs.

## Sharps

Wayne County encourages safe disposal of sharps. Sharps include syringes, needles, and lancets.



You can help prevent injury, illness, and pollution by following some simple steps when you dispose of these sharp objects.

You should place needles, syringes, lancets, and other sharp objects in a hard-plastic or metal container with a screw-on or tightly secured lid. Many containers found in the household, such as liquid laundry detergent bottles or metal coffee cans, will do, or you may purchase containers specifically designed for the disposal of medical waste sharps.

**Used sharps can cause injury and contaminate the environment.**

**Do not put sharp objects in any container you plan to recycle or return to a store, and do not use glass or clear plastic containers.** To dispose, you may choose one of the following methods:

1.) Take to local Household Hazardous Waste Collection; (For information on local HHW collections, call 734-326-3936.)