

A Resident's Self Help Guide for Safer Disposal of Needles, Syringes and other Sharps.



A Gunnedah Shire Council Health initiative

Sharps Disposal at Your Local Chemist

Syringes are being placed in garbage and recycling bins, resulting in occupational health and safety problems for workers at the waste and recycling centres. To address this problem, Gunnedah Shire Council, in conjunction with various organisations, have included a single use bin for people with diabetes and other users of lancets, syringes and pen needles.

This service is available at the following locations:

- ★ **Brocks Court Wolseley Park (mounted on toilet block wall).**
- ★ **O'Keefe Pavilion, Wolseley Park.**
- ★ **Mornington Park, Anzac Parade, Gunnedah (mounted on the toilet block wall).**
- ★ **Gunnedah Community Health Centre, Gunnedah Hospital, Marquis Street, Gunnedah.**
- ★ **Hagley/Osmond Chemist and Karen Carter Chemist (Conadilly Street).**

IMPORTANT

To use the new service, you should ensure that lancets, syringes and pen needles are placed in an appropriate rigid container with sealable lid prior to being taken to the pharmacy for disposal. For further information, contact any of the above mentioned pharmacies, or telephone Gunnedah Shire Council direct on 02 6740 2100.

Public Sharps Bins within the Gunnedah LGA

Public sharps disposal bins are located at the following locations but may change. Contact Gunnedah HIV/Hepatitis C Prevention Service for exact location.

- ★ **Vernados Carpark, Little Barber Street, Gunnedah (behind Crazy Clarks).**
- ★ **Pump House opposite Rugby Park, Wandobah Road.**
- ★ **Gunnedah Waste Management Facility.**

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Sharps Disposal Support

Gunnedah HIV/Hepatitis C Prevention Service

Hunter New England Area Health Service provides sharps collection/disposal, sharps disposal training and telephone advisory service.

**NSW Health Needle
Clean Up Hotline
1800 633 353**

How the Gunnedah Community Uses Sharps

Many people in the community rely on syringes or other sharps to maintain their health. One aspect of the government's successful HIV/Hepatitis C prevention program is needle availability to people who inject.

Unfortunately some needles and syringes are discarded in public places. If you do find any sharps in a public place, or use them at home, the steps outlined in this brochure will help you dispose of them safely.

It is important you remember that the National Centre in HIV/Epidemiology and Clinical Research advise that there is no documented case of a person having acquired a fatal disease from a needle or syringe discarded in a public place.



A Quick and Easy Guide to Safer Sharps Disposal

The following suggestions will help you dispose of sharps safely.

1. Take a sharps disposal container or a screw top puncture proof plastic container eg bleach container.
2. Put gloves on and use an appropriate sharps pick-up tool eg easy reach tool/tongs.
3. Place the sharps container on the ground. Never hold the container in your hand.
4. Never place your hands where you cannot see them.
5. Do not attempt to recap, break or bend the sharps.
6. Make sure no-one is standing near you so you don't accidentally jab them.
7. Carefully place the sharps into the container.
8. Close the sharps container.
9. Wash your hands.

For further advice on sharps disposal refer to the contact numbers on the rear of this brochure.

First Aid for a Needlestick Injury

In case of a needle puncture or other penetrating injury, follow these steps:

1. Squeeze the wound to encourage bleeding.
2. Flush the wound with clean running water.
3. Apply an appropriate germicide dressing.
4. Seek medical advice.
5. You should receive blood testing for HIV and hepatitis.
6. Testing should be accompanied by an appropriate pre and post test counselling.
7. Seek advice about treatment.
8. Report the incident to the appropriate officer at work.