

For Immediate Release
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**Statewide Ban on the Disposal of Needles, Syringes and Lancets in Household Trash
Went into Effect July 1, 2012**

*Residents may bring “sharps” to a kiosk at the Wellesley Fire Department daily 7:00 AM-8:00 PM
and
Medication and Needle Take-Back Days in the Spring and Fall and the
Household Hazardous Products Collection Day once a year in May*

A statewide ban on the disposal of needles, syringes and lancets (collectively known as “sharps”) went into effect July 1, 2012. The law stipulates that disposal of sharps will not be allowed in regular household trash in Massachusetts. ***Therefore, in Wellesley, residents cannot dispose of their sharps in the trash at the RDF, or in their household trash collected by a private trash hauler.***

So, what should residents do with their sharps? Residents may bring their home generated sharps (for people or pets) to **Wellesley Fire Department Headquarters** (457 Worcester Street – Route 9) beginning Monday, September 10, 2012; **every day between 7:00 AM – 8:00 PM**. Sharps should be brought in small capped, sturdy, puncture and leak-proof containers (such as a 16 oz. coffee can, rigid plastic container or approved 1 quart sharps container). Residents will be asked to place the container into a designated kiosk. Replacement sharps containers will be available for free at the Fire Department or Health Department for a limited time.

Wellesley Health and Fire Departments, as well as the Firefighters Union collaborated to offer residents a safe and convenient way to dispose of their sharps. Fire Chief Rick DeLorie stated, “As the Fire Chief, I am proud and fortunate to have personnel that are always willing to support the Health Department’s initiatives that enhance services to the residents and reduces the potential of an accidental needle-stick injury to an employee at the RDF.”

Residents may also store their sharps and bring them to the Wellesley Police Department during Medication and Needle Take-Back Days, on a particular Saturday in April and September or October. They may also bring their sharps to the RDF *once a year* - during the Household Hazardous Products Collection Day, the first Sunday in May.

In Wellesley, the law will be important for employees involved in sharps collection at the RDF, and private trash haulers, as it will significantly reduce the risk of needle-stick injuries and disease. It is especially timely, as RDF Superintendent Gordon Martin noted that “illegal disposal of sharps is a major concern, as they (sharps) have been found with more frequency in the plastic recycling areas.”

For more information and to download a sharps disposal brochure, please visit www.wellesleyma.gov/health

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