Needles/Sharps
Household Hazardous Waste

Home-generated sharps waste should be disposed of properly to protect you and your community. The improper disposal of sharps can cause harm to you, your children, and recycling center workers. Further, it is illegal to dispose of home-generated sharps waste in the trash or recycling containers or to flush them down the toilet.

Can I dispose of my home-generated needles/sharps in my trash can?

No. California law prohibits the disposal of needles/sharps waste, including needles, syringes and lancets, in the regular trash or recycling bin. Protect your family and others by properly recycling all needles/sharps.

How can I properly recycle needles/sharps?

- Needles/sharps should be transported to a proper collection center in a rigid, puncture-resistant, tightly-sealed container, including: bleach bottles, or coffee cans with lids.
- Containers should be no larger than 2 liters or 1/2 gallon.
- Label the container “Needles” or “Sharps” before disposing of it at an approved residential needles/sharps collection drop boxes or at your local household hazardous waste collection facility. Labeling the container with a thick black marker will allow for quick identification of the contents. Red needles/sharps containers can also be purchased at a local pharmacy.

Do not put needles/sharps in: paper or plastic bags, glass containers, cardboard or coated paper containers, plastic bottles that have a CRV (California Redemption Value), or milk jugs.

Where can I recycle a container with needles/sharps?

Containers can be dropped off for free at needles/sharps kiosks found throughout San Diego County, to find the nearest kiosk search “Sharps” or “Needles” For large amount of needles/sharps, schedule a drop-off appointment at your local household hazardous waste collection facility.