

Clinical Waste and Sharps in the Home

This information leaflet has been specially prepared for people who generate clinical waste in a domestic situation:

Residents

Visitors

Tourists

To arrange collection
& disposal of clinical
waste or sharps
contact:

One Cornwall:

0300 1234 141

Other Useful Contacts

Peninsula Community Health)
0845 170 8000

Health Protection Agency
St Austell 01726 627881

Cornwall Partnership Trust
Waste Manager 01209 318152

Environment Agency
Bodmin 08708 506 506

Cornwall Council
Waste Disposal Authority
0300 1234 141

Working in Partnership With: Environment Agency Cornwall Partnership Trust Cornwall County Council Peninsula Community Health

Achieving through Co-operation

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CORNWALL CLINICAL WASTE AND SHARPS IN THE HOME

CODE
OF PRACTICE
2015

What is Clinical Waste?

Defined as:

“Any waste which consists wholly or partly of human or animal tissue, blood or other body fluids, excretions, drugs or other pharmaceutical products, swabs or dressings, or syringes, needles or other sharps instruments, being waste which unless rendered safe may prove hazardous to any person coming into contact with it; and

Any other waste arising from medical, nursing, dental, veterinary, pharmaceutical or similar practice, investigation, treatment, care, teaching or research, or the collection of blood for transfusion, being waste which may cause infection to any person coming into contact with it.”

In the Safe Management of Healthcare Waste. Produced by Department of Health

What are Sharps?

Anything which can puncture the skin and may be contaminated with blood or other bodily fluid. These include finger prick lancets and platforms, needles and syringes, pen-needles, empty bottles and cartridges of insulin, blades and broken glass ampoules.

Low grade Clinical Waste

Most clinical waste in the home is low grade.

This includes incontinence pads sanitary towels disposable nappies and non-infectious dressings.

If quantities are relatively small (less than one third of a sack) they should be double wrapped and disposed of with other household refuse to be contained in double black plastic sacks.

Some offensive waste can be contained in tiger stripe sacks supplied.

For collection purposes, amounts of low grade clinical waste of one sack (or more) in total and all high grade waste must be put into an approved clinical waste sack or sharps bin as appropriate.

High Grade Clinical Waste What is it?

Potentially infectious items contaminated with medicines or bodily fluids contained in yellow or purple lidded sharps bins, yellow bags, yellow bags with a purple line (cytotoxic/cytostatic) or orange bags.

Additional care must be taken in disposing of this grade of waste from the home.

- **Clinical Waste sacks and Sharps bins must be clearly labeled and sealed to prevent accidental injury to the collector and to provide an audit trail.**
- **Needles, sharp instruments and aerosol cans must be kept out of clinical waste sacks.**
- **Unwanted medicines and pills must be returned to a Pharmacy for safe disposal.**

Advice on the collection and disposal of clinical waste is available from the contact telephone number provided overleaf.

Handling and Storage of Clinical Waste, both Grades

Quantities in excess of one sack of low grade and all high grade clinical waste must be separated from household waste and it is important to:

- **Avoid direct contact with clinical waste**
- **Store this waste separately from other refuse**
- **Store it in approved clinical waste sacks or Sharps containers away from children.**
- **Sacks must be no more than three quarters full, 5kg max weight and tied / sealed at the neck.**

Special Arrangements for Sharps Disposal

Place sharps only in an approved Sharps bin and NEVER loose in a sack or any other container.

In the event of accident or injury involving a Sharp seek medical advice immediately and safely dispose of the item in the approved way.

Disposal

Disposal is arranged and supervised in accordance with best practice.

Charges

Your Council will advise you if any collection charge is to be levied.

Supply of Sacks and Sharps bins

Clinical waste sacks can be supplied through contacting your Council.

Sharps containers can be supplied by your GP when prescribing injections, needles or other Sharps.

Your refuse collection contractor collects clinical waste in a dedicated vehicle. The service may, by necessity, be on a day other than your normal refuse collection day. Collection takes place as discreetly as possible from your premises.

Tourists and Temporary Residents

Anyone in this category requiring a clinical waste disposal service in Cornwall should seek advice on collection and disposal from:

Cornwall County Council