

KOOTENAI COUNTY SOLID WASTE DEPARTMENT

Medical Waste, Sharps & Medication Disposal Policy

This Department Policy governing the disposal of solid waste is promulgated under the authority of Title 4, Chapter 3, Kootenai County Code as it exists or may subsequently be amended and is effective on January 1, 2020.

Federal and State Law requires the safe handling of solid waste. The Department has the following requirement in place to mitigate potential hazards associated with medical waste, sharps and controlled substances in the waste stream.

Medical Waste

In order to meet safe handling requirements commercial medical waste is not accepted in the Kootenai County waste system and must be disposed of through reputable companies so as not to become a hazard to the general public.

Medical waste is a waste that is known or reasonably expected to contain pathogens. Medical waste is liquid or semi-liquid blood or other potentially infectious materials; items caked with dried blood or other potentially infectious material and are capable of releasing these materials during handling; contaminated sharps; and pathological and microbiological waste containing blood or other potentially infectious materials.

Untreated medical waste generated by hospitals, clinics, physicians' offices, dental practices, blood banks, veterinary hospitals/clinics, medical research facilities, and laboratories, is not acceptable for disposal at solid waste sites.

Waste generated by households and disposed by the homeowner is regulated as household waste and may be disposed of with trash in most instances. Bagging and containing the material may be required before disposal and disposers are asked to identify the material when entering the disposal facility to obtain proper deposit instructions.

Sharps Program

The Department accepts used needles from **residents** of Kootenai County as long as the following requirements are met:

- Needles must be contained within a thick walled plastic jug. Sharps containers specifically made for needle containment are the best option. Bleach bottles, detergent bottles and milk jugs are also allowable.
- The sharps container must be clearly marked with "used sharps."
- Containers must be securely closed so that needles cannot escape during transport or deposit of container into collection drums.
- Used sharps container(s) must be kept separated from general refuse and placed individually into bright red bins labeled sharps, located within the recycle islands at either transfer station.

The Sharps disposal program only accepts used sharps; no medical waste, treatment residuals, used medications or other refuse will be accepted into the sharps collection drums.

Medication Disposal

The Department does not take any forms of prescription medications (i.e. controlled substances) for disposal. Prescription medications are regulated by the Department of Justice - Drug Enforcement Administration. Federal law (21 C.F.R §1317) lists law enforcement, authorized manufacturers, distributors, hospitals/clinics with an on-site pharmacy, and retail pharmacies as locations that maintain collection receptacles for controlled substances.

Enforcement

Failure to comply with proper disposal procedures, making a false declaration regarding waste generation or the deliberate disposal of improper waste, and/or the disposal of waste in a manner which may result in a hazard to ground water or the environment, may result in refusal of service and may be defined as unlawful disposal, which is subject to the penalties and remedies outlined in Title 4, Chapter 3, Section 16, Kootenai County Code.