USED NEEDLE DISPOSAL PROGRAM
A NEWTON BIA SAFETY INITIATIVE
# Used Needle Disposal Program

## What's in the Used Needle Disposal Program?

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Needles and needle debris are a challenging issue for Newton, however Newton is not alone. Strategies to ensure that individuals and communities are as safe and healthy as possible have been undertaken across the globe. Needles are used by people with specific health conditions and people with specific addictions. Ensuring that people who use needles can access safe disposal, and that stray needles and needle debris in the community are dealt with promptly and safely is one of the goals of the Newton BIA.

This report provides important information on safe needle disposal practices. The Newton BIA has discovered that needle debris severely impacts the local community. Safety patrols often discover batches of needles in high traffic areas. Removing needle debris from the community is important for the safety concerns of all local residents.

PROGRAM GOALS
1. Raise community awareness about needle safety.
2. Reduce the number of discarded needles on our streets.
3. Reduce the risk and prevent injury to the public, especially children, who find discarded needles.
4. Provide options for safe disposal of needles where the need exists.

WHO ARE THE PARTNERS?
The partners include:
- Newton Business Improvement Association
- Commissionaires
- RCMP
- Surrey Bylaw
- Fraser Health
- Participating Business Owners

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?
Newton BIA can provide a variety of resources and support to communities and individuals interested in safe needle disposal.
- A series of posters about needle safety aimed at children, general public, and needle users.
- Provide static information at local trade shows, safety fairs, and community events.
- Current information on safe needle container locations and collection of statistics.
- Information on how communities can explore the need for a safe needle container in their neighborhood.

WHO CAN YOU CONTACT?
Newton BIA at (604) 593-2294 or visit www.newtonbia.com
WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT NEEDLE USE IN NEWTON?

- People use needles for many different purposes.
- There are many medical conditions that involve using needles at home; diabetes is the most common.
- People with conditions like cancer and arthritis use needles to control pain.
- Some people inject drugs because they have an addiction.
- People who use injection drugs have said they do not intend to harm other people in the community when they are getting rid of used needles; they will throw out needles safely if there are safe choices available.
- Everyone who uses needles has the same need to get rid of their used needles safely; with safe disposal, we can reduce the probability of someone accidentally getting hurt.

CHOICES FOR DISPOSING USED NEEDLES

- Used needles can be taken to many pharmacies in the Newton area.
- The Newton BIA has placed yellow used needle boxes around Newton for disposing used needles.
SAFE NEEDLE DISPOSAL IN PICTURES

The syringes and needles used at home or by drug users look the same as ones you see in a doctor’s office. Needles are also called “sharps”.

WHAT DOES A LANCET LOOK LIKE?

People with diabetes use a lancet – a very small needle – to prick their finger to draw a small amount of blood. They do this several times each week to check the level of sugar in their blood. The needle sits inside a holder, or lanceting device. Syringes, needles, and lancets are known as “needle debris”.

WHAT DOES A NEEDLE CLIP DEVICE LOOK LIKE?

A needle clip device is used by diabetics to clip the needles they use to inject insulin. Its opening is only large enough for a needle to fit through. The sides push together to clip the needle from the syringe. The purpose is to seal the needles in a container so that no one is accidentally poked.

WHAT DO THE ‘USED NEEDLE DISPOSAL PROGRAM’ BOXES LOOK LIKE?

These boxes are only for collecting used needles around Newton. You can take expired medication to any pharmacy. If your neighborhood would like to have an outdoor safe needle box installed, call Newton BIA at (604) 593-2294 to discuss the steps you can take.

WHAT DOES A SHARPS CONTAINER LOOK LIKE?

A sharps container is made of hard plastic with a small opening at the top. It is especially made for safely holding used needles, syringes, and lancets. Sharps containers, or "biohazard containers", come in various sizes and can hold a large number of needles. Typically, diabetics use these containers for their used insulin needles. You can buy a sharps container at any pharmacy.
WHO CAN BE POKED ACCIDENTALLY?

People using needles need a way to throw them out after they are finished using them. Without wanting to harm anyone else, they may throw the needles in the garbage or on the ground if they do not see an easy way to get rid of them safely. Anyone can get hurt if they are accidentally poked.

HOW COULD A PERSON GET HURT?

- A person who tries to put the cap back on a needle can be easily poked.
- A person looking through garbage for pop cans and empty bottles can be poked if someone tossed a needle in the bin.
- A parks maintenance person can be poked if there are needles hidden in a flowerbed or under a shrub in a park.
- A person who picks up a needle while walking along the street or an alley can be poked if it is not handled properly. Carrying loose needles without a container, frequently leads to an accidental poke.
- A worker who is cleaning public washrooms or hotel rooms can be poked if needles are hidden in waste baskets or dark corners.
- A curious child in a playground can pick up a needle tucked under a bush. That needle could end up in his or her mouth.
- A city waste collector can be poked by a needle sticking out of a garbage bag. Even needles in food containers can poke out if the container is crushed.
- A child attracted to something shiny or an adult reaching under a heating vent in the hallway of an apartment building can be poked by a needle pushed underneath.
- A person working at a Materials Recovery Facility (the recycling plant) can be poked while sorting recycled items.
- In addition to people getting hurt, a dog or cat can get poked wandering through bushes where needles are hidden.

These are just a few examples. You can imagine many more situations where someone could be poked if needles are not safely discarded.
WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF TOUCHING USED NEEDLES OR BEING POKED BY A USED NEEDLE?

We know picking up other people’s garbage with bare hands is not a good idea because it is an easy way to come in contact with germs. Needles are like other garbage. Picking up needles with your bare hands is a way to get a skin infection if you have an opening in your skin.

When a person finishes using a needle, some of that person’s blood may still be inside the needle or syringe. If you are poked by a needle and the blood enters your bloodstream, you could get sick as well.

The vast majority of people will not get sick by picking up or being poked by a used needle, but it is extremely important to be cautious. When viruses in needles are exposed to the open air, most will die within minutes to hours or longer. There is no way to know how long a needle has been lying where you found it, so it is best to be safe.

What are HIV and AIDS?
The body is usually protected from illness by the immune system. When Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infects the body, it weakens the immune system. The infected person can easily get sick with rare and hard to treat infections and cancers. When the immune system is badly damaged, a person can develop Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

- HIV is found in all body fluids of an infected person. It is spread through blood, semen, vaginal secretions, and breast milk.
- HIV is spread by having unprotected sex.
- HIV is spread by sharing needles and injection equipment.

You can greatly reduce the risk of getting or spreading HIV:

- If you practice safer sex, using a condom.
- If you use clean needles every time.

- The HIV virus dies quickly when exposed to air.
- There are many medications that can keep an individual healthy for many years.
- There is no vaccine and no cure for HIV at this time.
WHAT ARE HEPATITIS B AND C?
Hepatitis is a disease of the liver, caused by a virus.

- Hepatitis is spread from the blood or body fluids of one person who has hepatitis to the blood or body fluids of another person.
- You may get hepatitis if you share needles or other injection equipment.
- You may get the disease if you are poked by a needle with infected blood on/in it.
- You may get the disease if you have sex with someone who is infected.

You can prevent getting or passing Hepatitis B & C to someone else by:

- Getting the Hepatitis B vaccine.
- Using clean needles and equipment every time.
- Practicing safer sex by using a condom.

- Hepatitis C can live for a long time outside of the body
- Most people recover completely if they get sick with Hepatitis B
- There is no vaccine to prevent Hepatitis C
- Only 3 of every 10 people with Hepatitis C know they have the disease and most carry the virus for a long time
- Treatment is possible
WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH YOUR USED NEEDLES?

Collect your needles in a sharps container. Store the container far out of reach of children. You can buy a puncture-proof sharps container at most pharmacies. Some pharmacies give customers a free biohazard container to fill. When it is 2/3 full, seal it completely and make sure the container has a biohazard label on it. Bring your sharps home when you are travelling.

**OR**

**TAKE THE USED NEEDLES IN A SHARPS CONTAINER TO YOUR LOCAL PHARMACY. CHECK TO MAKE SURE YOUR LOCAL PHARMACY ACCEPTS NEEDLES. SOME PHARMACIES ONLY ACCEPT NEEDLES FROM THEIR OWN CUSTOMERS.**

**CALL THE CITY OF SURREY ENGINEERING DISPATCH AT: (604) 591-4152 TO PICK UP THE USED NEEDLE FOR YOU.**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNSAFE WAYS TO DISPOSE OF NEEDLES</th>
<th>WHY IS IT UNSAFE?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Putting needles in the recycling bag or blue bin.</td>
<td>Waste Management workers sort all the recycled items by hand. A worker could be poked by a needle.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Putting needles in the garbage.</td>
<td>Waste collectors can be poked if the needles are loose or in a container. Containers can get crushed and the needles can poke through.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting needles down the toilet. Putting needles down the sewer.</td>
<td>The needles go into the sewer system and then into the river. Someone could get poked and it is environmentally unclean.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Putting needles on the ground or under a bush.</td>
<td>A child, adult or pet could be scratched or poked.</td>
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<td>Tucking needles into places they won't be seen.</td>
<td>A person cleaning, such as a janitor or housekeeping staff, could get hurt.</td>
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WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU SEE A USED NEEDLE SOMEONE HAS THROWN AWAY?

CHILDREN
You should leave the needle where it is. Call an adult for help.

ADULT
If you see a needle, you can pick it up so someone does not get injured or poked. You can pick the needle up carefully by following these four steps or you can call for help (see below). You do not need to be afraid if you are cautious.

1. Use a pair of tongs, pliers, or tweezers to pick up the needle. It is best to wear rubber gloves.
2. Pick the needle up by pointing the needle tip down and away from you.
3. Put the needle in a sharps container, on a stable surface, and seal the lid tightly closed. You should not use a glass jar, light plastic, or a milk carton. Glass can break and needles easily poke through light plastic or milk cartons. **IMPORTANT: Do not try to put the cap back on the needle.**
4. Take the container to a pharmacy. You can also take it to a safe needle box but be sure to handle the used needle carefully and pick it up with rubber gloves and/or tongs.

OR
If you are not comfortable picking up the needle and want someone to pick it up for you, you can call (604) 591-4152 and someone from City of Surrey’s Engineering Dispatch team will come and collect it. This may take a few hours if they are busy with emergencies when you call.

What will help you decide if you should call for help?
- If you are too nervous to pick it up.
- If you see many needles in a pile, for example, in a stairwell or behind a dumpster.
- If you see broken needles scattered on the ground.
- If you have no way of taking the needle in a strong container to a safe place.
# Used Needle Disposal Program

## Steps to Safe Needle Disposal

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<th>Instructions</th>
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<td>01</td>
<td><strong>Do not try to put the cap back on the needle, snap, remove, or bend needles.</strong></td>
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| 02   | **Pick up the needle carefully with rubber gloves and/or tongs.**  
      | **OR**  
      | **Call City of Surrey’s Engineering Dispatch at (604) 591-4152 to collect it.** |
| 03   | **Put the needle in a sharps container, tightly seal and label it.**  
      | **OR**  
      | **Call City of Surrey’s Engineering Dispatch at (604) 591-4152 to collect it.** |
| 04   | **Take the needle to a pharmacy that accepts used needles in sharps containers.**  
      | **OR**  
      | **Take the needle to one of the yellow safe needle boxes.** |
USED NEEDLE DISPOSAL PROGRAM

PHARMACIES THAT ACCEPT USED NEEDLES

Needles must be placed inside a sharps container, sealed, and have a legible biohazard label.

**COSTCO PHARMACY**
7423 KING GEORGE BOULEVARD
SURREY, BC V3W 5A8
(604) 596-7435

**REAL CANADIAN SUPERSTORE PHARMACY**
7550 KING GEORGE BOULEVARD
SURREY, BC V3W 2T2
(604) 599-3704

**SAFEWAY PHARMACY**
7165 - 138TH STREET
SURREY, BC V3W 7T9
(604) 594-4515

*Only accept needles from their own customers

**SAVE ON FOODS PHARMACY**
UNIT #100, 7320 KING GEORGE BOULEVARD
SURREY, BC V3W5A5
(604) 599-6760

**SHoppers Drug Mart PHARMACY**
UNIT #100, 7322 KING GEORGE BOULEVARD
SURREY, BC V3W 5A5
(604) 590-2271

**SOMERSET PHARMACY**
UNIT #7, 13791 - 72ND AVENUE
SURREY, B.C. V3W 9Y9
(604) 590-5587

*Only accept needles from their own customers

**UNIVERSAL PHARMACY**
UNIT #1115, 7318 - 137TH STREET
SURREY, BC V3W 1A3
(604) 594-9535
LOCATIONS OF SAFE NEEDLE DISPOSAL BOXES IN NEWTON

01 | **THE BRICK**
BEHIND THE STORE
6935 KING GEORGE BOULEVARD
SURREY, BC V3W 5A1

02 | **MCDONALDS**
INSIDE THE WOMEN’S WASHROOM
13565 - 72ND AVENUE
SURREY, BC V3W 2N9

03 | **MCDONALDS**
INSIDE THE MEN’S WASHROOM
7125 - 138TH STREET
SURREY, BC V3W 0E1

04 | **HOLLYWOOD 3 CINEMAS**
BEHIND THE THEATRE
7125 - 138TH STREET
SURREY, BC V3W 0E1

05 | **SUPERSTORE**
BEHIND THE STORE
7550 KING GEORGE BOULEVARD
SURREY, BC V3W 2T2

06 | **BARK PARK**
NEAR THE ENTRANCE
70A AVENUE & KING GEORGE BOULEVARD
SURREY, BC V3W 5A1

07 | **ROYAL FAIR PLAZA**
FENCE BEHIND THE BUSINESSES
72ND AVENUE
SURREY, BC V3W 4X5

08 | **ESSO**
BEHIND THE CAR WASH, BESIDE THE HYDRO BOX
7195 KING GEORGE BOULEVARD
SURREY, BC V3W 5A4
WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU ARE POKED BY A NEEDLE?

- Squeeze out as much blood as you can.
- Wash the poke site right away with soap and warm water.
- Call non-emergency at (604) 599-0502 or visit a local clinic.
USED NEEDLE DISPOSAL PROGRAM

RESOURCES

NEEDLE DISPOSAL LINKS
Stericycle - Medical Waste Disposal
http://www.stericycle.ca/solutions/medical-waste-disposal

City of Edmonton’s Safe Needle Disposal Kit

HEALTH INFORMATION LINKS
Fraser Health - Disposing Needles Safely
http://www.fraserhealth.ca/media/disposing-needles-safely_0914.pdf

NEWS STORIES
Major News Story in Maple Ridge About a Young Boy Being Pricked by a Needle

Nanaimo Children Pricked

Use of Narcan to Deal with Injection Overdose