

POLICY: 3.8.4

**SAFE NEEDLE & SYRINGE COLLECTION AND
DISPOSAL STRATEGY**

OBJECTIVES

- To maintain the City's highly successful needle and syringe collection and disposal programme.
- To promote a safe environment in which to work, recreate, reside and visit.

POLICY STATEMENT

The City strives to provide safe public places for the use and enjoyment of all persons residing, working, recreating or visiting the area. The Policy outlines tried and tested procedures which minimise the risk of inappropriately discarded needles on City property and public land.

The Policy does not apply to the disposal of needles and syringes on private property.

Date Adopted:	22 September 1997
Date Amended:	26 February 2002
Date Reviewed:	13 May 2008, 26 February 2013
Date of Next Review:	February 2018

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURE FOR SAFE NEEDLE & SYRINGE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

Background

The Council's needle and syringe collection and disposal programme initiative was developed in 1997 in collaboration with the Department of Health's Sexually Transmissible Disease Branch, the Western Australian Substance Users Association, the WA Police Service and the City of Perth, as a pilot programme for WA with respect to mitigating the adverse environmental, public health, and community perception issues created by the inappropriate disposal of needles and syringes throughout the community.

The policy has proven highly successful in reducing the number of inappropriately disposed needles and syringes within public areas of the City. To ensure that the policy continues to deliver successful outcomes to our community, it is imperative that the policy be regularly reviewed and provided with appropriate funding to ensure the policy objectives are achieved.

Guidance for City of Vincent Employees with Respect to Inappropriately Discarded Needles and syringes.

1. Location of public needle and syringe disposal points – identification process

- 1.1 All needles and syringes collected by the City's Officers and all reports received by members of the public, regarding the location of inappropriately discarded needles and syringes, are to be logged for data collection and hotspot identification purposes.
- 1.2 Officers from Health Services, Rangers and Community Safety Services, Technical Services, Engineering Services, Parks Services shall be responsible for recording and maintaining a log book with specific details of inappropriately discarded needles and syringes.
- 1.3 The City's Health Services shall periodically assess the needle and syringe collection/public location report data to examine the suitability of each specific rigid metal sharps bin location throughout the City.
- 1.4 The City's Health Services are authorised to exercise discretion with respect to coordinating the removal, relocation or increase in the number of collection points throughout the City.
- 1.5 All log books maintained by the following services areas shall be submitted to the City's Health Services each quarter, for review and data compilation purposes:
 - Health Services;
 - Rangers and Community Safety Services;
 - Parks Services;
 - Technical Services; and
 - Engineering Services.

2. Safety and Handling

2.1 Procedure for the Safe Collection of Inappropriately Discarded Needles from Public Areas

2.1.1 Officers must use the following procedure during the collection and disposal of needles and syringes:

- (i) Use an approved yellow sharps disposal container, or if unavailable at the time, find a strong, rigid walled, plastic container with a screw-top lid, e.g. a fruit juice bottle (no glass bottles as they can shatter).
- (ii) Take the container to the needle and syringe (not the reverse), place the container on the ground next to the needle and syringe. Do not hold the container when depositing the needle and syringe.
- (iii) Pick the syringe up by the barrel end only, and never touch the sharp end. Puncture resistant gloves or long handled tongs should be made available as personal protective equipment by each service area, and used by all staff members who are responsible for the collection of needles and syringes.
- (iv) Never try to re-cap the syringe or break off the needle.
- (v) Take the syringe to the container and put the syringe inside it.
- (vi) Screw the lid on tightly.
- (vii) Never throw the syringe or container down toilets, into gutters or drains. Dispose in a waste receptacle, or provide to Health Services.
- (viii) Provide full sharps disposal containers to Health Services for appropriate disposal by a registered medical waste operator in accordance with the Department of Health "*Guidelines for the Storage, Transport and Disposal of Medical Waste*".

2.2 Authorised Persons for the Collection of Inappropriately Discarded Needles and syringes

2.2.1 The following officers are duly authorised for the collection and disposal of needles and syringes reported by members of the public during office hours:

- Environmental Health Officers; and
- Rangers.

2.2.2 The following officers are duly authorised for the collection and disposal of needles and syringes upon identification whilst operating in the field:

- Environmental Health Officers;
- Rangers; and
- All members of the City's Outdoor Workforce provided with appropriate needle and syringe collection equipment.

2.2.3 The City's Rangers are duly authorised for the collection and disposal of needles and syringes after hours, in the event that a customer contacts the after-hours emergency number 9273 6061.

2.3 Information to be provided to Customers Regarding Safe Handling and Disposal:

In instances where customers are willing to dispose of the waste themselves, the customer should be advised how to minimise the risks of needle stick injuries by disposing of needles and syringes in accordance with the procedure outlined in 2.1 of this Policy.

2.4 Reasonable Precautions

All reasonable measures and precautions are to be taken by officers and private operators to protect their own, and community members health and safety, in accordance with the procedures of this Policy and as required by the Occupational Health and Safety Act 1984, during both the collection, disposal and transport of such waste.

2.5 Sharps Waste Generated by Commerce, Government Agencies and Persons with Medical Conditions Requiring Intravenous Injections

2.5.1 Syringes accumulated by a resident with a medical condition may be disposed of in a rigid plastic bottle, for example a soft drink bottle, and the lid screwed on tightly and placed in a normal domestic rubbish bin. The City is not obliged to collect or accept for disposal, material from private citizens.

2.5.2 Syringes and other medical waste generated by commercial premises and government owned properties must be disposed of by a registered medical waste operator in accordance with the Department of Health *"Guidelines for the Storage, Transport and Disposal of Medical Waste"* and the City of Vincent Health Local Law 2004. The City is not obliged to collect or accept for disposal, material from such establishments.

2.6 Procedure in case of Needle Stick Injury

2.6.1 The procedure to be taken where an employee sustains a needle stick injury:

An employee should immediately:

Step 1 Wash the injury thoroughly with soap and water. DO NOT squeeze the area around the injury to encourage bleeding.

Step 2 Retain the needle/syringe and report the injury immediately to their Supervisor. The Supervisor should also initiate a careful search of the area where the injury took place, in order to recover any other items.

Step 3 The employee, together with the actual needle/syringe, should be taken to the Manager, Health Services & Manager, Human Resources, so that the appropriate medical follow-up to the injury can be immediately arranged.

Step 4 Complete a workplace incident, accident and injury report form in accordance with requirements of the Occupational Health & Safety Act 1984.

3.1 Service provider responsibilities/ Conditions of Contract

- (a) Rigid metal sharps bins to be provided with single use plastic inserts, at all needle and syringe disposal and collection locations throughout the City.
- (b) The Service Provider is to be responsible for the installation, provision, repair and maintenance of all rigid metal sharps bins and single use plastic inserts.
- (c) Any disposal and collection point which is damaged, rusted, missing a rigid metal sharps bin or substandard must be reported to the City's Health Services and be replaced by the contractor upon approval from Health Services.
- (d) Each needle and syringe disposal and collection point is to be serviced as per agreed frequencies determined between the Service Provider and Health Services.
- (e) All service work must be completed to the satisfaction of the City's Health Services.

- (f) No service work is to be undertaken before 0700 hours or after 1700 hours weekdays, or on weekend days or public holidays, unless otherwise specifically approved by the Manager, Health Services.
- (g) Appropriate verbal warning must be given before entering any public toilet facilities where the operator is of the opposite sex.
- (h) Needles must not be clipped, bent, broken, recapped or otherwise manipulated by hand and all precautions must be taken to prevent injury.
- (i) PVC or appropriate hand-protecting gloves must be worn during this service, but note that these are not impervious to needles and due care is to be taken.
- (j) The sharps container sites shall be cleared, and left clean and tidy to the satisfaction of the City's Health Services.
- (k) The Service Provider must maintain an up to date Register detailing dates, times, operator's signature, containers (and their approved locations) emptied, and date that batch was incinerated) in accordance with the Department of Health "*Guidelines for the Storage, Transport and Disposal of Medical Waste*" and the City of Vincent Health Local Law 2004). This register may be inspected at any time by the City's Officers. A copy of each service rendered and service report outlining the weight of needles collected and condition of containers/bins are to be provided to the City's Health Services each month, but by no later than the last Friday of the first full working week of each month. The condition of the bins at each location is to be monitored, and their status reported on when requested, or voluntarily should problems be detected.
- (l) The contractor shall not vary any of the service works or conditions unless specifically authorised by the Manager Health Services in writing.
- (m) Should any element of the service or related works by the Service Provider be substandard or not to the satisfaction of the City's Health Services, no payment will be made until the matter has been reasonably resolved between the two parties.

3.2 Service Provider Contract Renewal and Quotation Submission Process

3.2.1 Contract Renewal

Quotations are to be sought from three (3) appropriate medical waste service providers for renewal, every two (2) years, to collect and dispose of needles and syringes from all public disposal points located throughout the City, and to maintain, repair or replace all rigid metal sharps bin, when required, upon approval by Manager Health Services or the Senior Environmental Health Officer. Due to the small number of service providers available to deal with the collection and disposal of medical waste within the Perth metropolitan area, it is considered unsustainable to seek quotations for this contract every 6-months. As such, renewal timeframes of this policy are exempt from standard requirements of Council Policy 1.2.3 Purchasing.

3.2.2 Quotation Submission Process

Quotation submissions must include a response/acknowledgement to the following criteria:

- (a) A statement acknowledging that the 'Service Provider Responsibilities/Conditions of Contract' will be complied with at all times;
- (b) Demonstrated knowledge of compliance with relevant legislation and protocols;
- (c) Manual removal;
- (d) Secure and safe transportation;
- (e) Incineration (period of time between collection and incineration, approved incineration facility etc);
- (f) Previous experience managing a similar contract for a local government authority or large commercial organisation;
- (g) First Aid Training of all operators;
- (h) Procedure policy on needle stick injury;
- (i) Immunisation of all operators against Hepatitis and other transmissible blood carrying diseases that may be immunised against;
- (j) Training of all operators in the safe collection and disposal of sharps;
- (k) A copy of a relevant and current Public liability Insurance Policy to the sum of no less than ten (10) million dollars;
- (l) Workers compensation insurance to an amount not less than ten (10) million dollars;
- (m) Professional indemnity insurance of not less than five (5) million dollars;
- (n) Confidentiality of documents supplied to companies for quoting, or to the approved Service Provider and subsequent records must be maintained;

- (o) The Service Provider shall be wholly responsible for Industrial Relations associated with the Service. The General Conditions of Contract AS 2124-1992 are applicable where an aspect is not covered in this document; and
- (p) The Contractor must indemnify the City, and its employees, in writing as part of the submission, against all/any claims arising out of the services and works and it must include loss of or damage to own property, personal injury, disease, death, public liability and non-compliance with any relevant legislation, standards and protocols or guides. The Contractor must, before any service or works commence and thereafter maintain, valid insurance for public liability, personal injuries and occupational diseases, workers compensation and loss of or damage to own or other property, comprehensive motor vehicles insurance, third party comprehensive general liability insurance. Labour relations and the health and safety of the service staff is the Contractors sole responsibility.

Footnotes:

- If the Service Provider is unable to comply with any of the 'Service Provider Responsibilities/Conditions of Contract' listed in this procedure, the Service Provide shall submit in writing, justification for being unable to adhere with the relevant condition(s).
- Should the number of locations/bins be increased after the date of agreement, a *pro rata* additional payment will be applicable.