

Analysis: The Impact of Needle, Syringe, and Lancet Disposal on the Community

Kathleen Gold, R.N., M.S.N., C.D.E.

Abstract

There are over 7.5 billion needles and syringes used outside of the health care system each year by individuals with diabetes, migraines, allergies, infertility, arthritis, HIV, hepatitis, multiple sclerosis, osteoporosis, psoriasis, or other conditions. Disposal of needles, syringes, lancets, and other medical products are not regulated in the home, while these same products used in health care facilities are strictly regulated. Home-generated medical waste is routinely placed into curbside trash, placing sanitation workers and custodial personnel at personal risk of a needle-stick injury. The Coalition for Safe Community Needle Disposal is working to establish a solution that is satisfactory to all stakeholders, sharing the burden of these programs with the pharmaceutical industry, medical device industry, waste management industry, recycling companies, and local and state governments.

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Author Affiliation: Diabetes Research and Wellness Foundation, Washington D.C.

Abbreviations: (EPA) Environmental Protection Agency, (MRF) materials recovery facility

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Corresponding Author: Kathleen Gold, R.N., M.S.N., C.D.E., Diabetes Research and Wellness Foundation, 5151 Wisconsin Ave. NW, Suite 420, Washington D.C. 20016; email address kathy@kathygoldcde.org