


University of Missouri – Kansas City

Effective Date: January 25, 2006

Responsible Parties: All Employees and Students

Issued by: 
Administration and Finance

Sharps Handling Policy

I. Purpose

To provide a necessary safety mechanism for the handling and disposition of sharps waste at all UMKC facilities.

II. Definitions, Descriptions, and Disposal Procedures

Sharps: Sharp objects that by design can cut or penetrate the skin. This includes needles, scalpels, and razor blades. Also included are broken glass objects that are contaminated by biological toxins. These must be placed in approved sharps containers/receptacles. Custodial staff should not transport.

Chemically Contaminated Sharps: Objects that are contaminated by hazardous chemicals as defined in the Chemical Management Plan. These include pipettes, pipette tips, fragile lab glass, broken mercury thermometers, broken light bulbs and broken glass pieces. These must be placed in sealed chemical containers and recorded on a Hazardous Material Pickup Form for disposal through EHS services. Custodial staff should not transport.

Approved Sharps Containers: Containers that are resistant to leaking, puncture and breakage made of rigid plastic, metal or glass. These require a secure lid and an appropriate label.

Broken glass and plastic ware: Non-contaminated and non-infectious pipettes, pipette tips, fragile lab glass and broken glass pieces. These should be contained in a sturdy cardboard box, sealed with tape and marked "Broken Glass." Set box beside waste container for custodial pickup.

Chemical bottles: Common chemical bottles can be placed in the waste receptacles if they are unbroken, triple rinsed, labels obliterated, and lids removed.

Radioactive Sharps: Sharps objects contaminated by radioactive material. Treat as Radioactive Waste. Label approved sharps container with the Isotope, the Activity, the Date, the Laboratory room number and the Principal Investigator/Lab Supervisor.

III. Additional

- Do not recap, break, or bend syringe needles
- Do not remove lids or overfill sharps containers
- Do not place hands into sharps or disposal containers
- The preferred dimensions of broken glass boxes is 18"x12"x10" (common empty copy paper boxes)
- Do not overload broken glass boxes
- Never use cardboard boxes to contain needles, scalpels, or razor blades
- Examination gloves do not provide sufficient protection from laceration or puncture
- Custodial staff will not handle open needles.