

Proper Disposal of Medical Sharps, Medication and Mercury Thermometers

The Health Department receives several calls a month from residents asking about proper disposal of sharps, medications and mercury thermometers. The town has disposal kiosks located at the Fire and Police Departments and mercury thermometers can be exchanged for a digital one. Mercury thermometers can be exchanged at the Health Department during business hours.

In July 1, 2012, the Department of Public Health (DPH) passed a regulation that ...”home sharps as well as unopened packages of hypodermic needles and lancets shall not be disposed in solid municipal waste.” The Fire Department has a **residential sharps disposal kiosk** that is accessible every day between the hours of 8 am- 6 pm. Red biohazard boxes are preferred. If one is not available, then all sharps must be in an opaque (not clear), puncture proof container such as a detergent or bleach bottle. The container must be sealed and labeled “Do not recycle.” If no one is present at the station, please do not leave sharps outside the Fire Department door.

With more than 3000 prescription medications available in the US and hundreds more over the counter medications available for purchase, proper disposal of medications is an emerging social and environmental concern. Medications that are past their due date or were prescribed for a condition no longer present should be discarded and not kept in the house. This decreases the risk of ground water contamination or illicit drug use. The Police Department lobby has a **medication disposal kiosk** that is available 24/7. Prescriptions, over the counter meds, samples, pet medication, ointments and liquid medications in a glass or leak-proof container are accepted.

The town of Sharon is fortunate to have these services available and with everyone’s effort, unwanted hazardous waste and medications will be discarded properly. If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact the Health Department.