



MUNICIPALITY OF TEMAGAMI POLICY MANUAL
SECTION: PUBLIC WORKS
POLICY TITLE: **SAFE HANDLING OF SHARPS & NEEDLE STICKS**
SCHEDULE A TO BY-LAW:
POLICY NO:

POLICY

The Municipality of Temagami is committed to the health, safety and well-being of our employees and the citizens that it serves. This policy and procedure outlines the prevention measures and the actions necessary in the event of such an injury to ensure the proper management of injuries.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff, students and contractors. All needles, sharps and body fluids will be treated as being potentially contaminated and the procedures documented in this document will be followed thoroughly on each occasion.

Services and areas where the risk of needle stick injury may arise include the following:

- Public washrooms
- Garbage cans/bags
- Parks
- Parking lots
- Sewers
- Waste management services/recycling

The above list is not exhaustive

DEFINITIONS

Needle Stick Injury – a penetrating stab wound from a needle or other sharp object that may result in exposure to blood or other bodily fluids.

Sharps - objects including but not limited to needles, syringes, razor blades, broken glass, and other items that could cause a puncture, cut or abrasion injury if not handled in a safe manner.

Blood–Borne Viruses - are able to spread in the blood. Several types of hepatitis are caused by blood borne viruses: Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and also HIV. This means that you can become exposed to these viruses (and the infections they cause) if you come into direct contact with blood that is infected with one of these viruses.

Sharps Disposal Container- sharps should be collected in an approved yellow sharps container (1.4L or 4.5L). Other yellow sharps containers that are leak-proof, puncture-resistant and labeled with a universal biohazard symbol may be accepted.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- The supervisor is responsible for ensuring workers are familiar with the hazards associated with sharps and sharp objects and the proper disposal procedures. The supervisor is responsible for issuing the proper personal protective equipment to the worker to provide protection when exposed to sharp objects including needles. The supervisor will also provide training to the worker on the procedures for the correct handling and disposal of sharp objects. The supervisor will ensure all incidents are investigated and reported. The supervisor will also ensure that this policy is adhered to.
- The worker is responsible to use the required personal protective equipment or clothing as assigned in accordance with this procedure. The worker is also responsible to follow the safe work procedures as outlined below for the handling and safe disposal of sharp objects including sharps (needles). The worker must report to their supervisor all Sharps and Needle Stick Injuries incidents regarding sharps and needle stick injuries. The worker should contact their supervisor if not comfortable handling or picking up discarded needles or sharps.

HAZARDS

The presence of used needles, drug paraphernalia and needle kits can be found in Municipal parks, washrooms, waste containers and catch basins/manholes. The presence of used needles, drug paraphernalia and needle kits can carry disease or viruses that could be dangerous to the health of employees and the public who come into contact with them. Hypodermic needles, syringes and condoms, for example, can carry small amounts of bodily substances that could be contaminated with viruses such as HIV or hepatitis B and C. Viruses can enter the body of a person through the skin (especially if it is broken or if they have an abrasion or rash), or through the eyes, mouth or mucus membranes. Viruses can also enter the body by being poked or stuck by a needle (sharps). The word “sharps” is most often used to refer to needles and syringes, but sharps can also mean other sharp instruments such as razor blades and knives. Workers need to know how to protect themselves against contact with these sharp objects which may have been improperly discarded in the garbage. Also, workers need to be aware that there is the possibility that “drug residue or substances” could be present.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) may include disposable gloves (latex, nitrile), thick-soled footwear, steel toe boots and safety goggles. Other equipment may include tongs/litter picker, sharps container and bleach solution (one part bleach to ten parts water).

PROCEDURES

Procedures all employees should know:

- Always wear gloves when cleaning washrooms and taking out the garbage.
- Never put your hands into places you can't see.
- Be especially careful around garbage and handle it as little as possible.
- Be alert. Watch for sharp objects sticking out of the bag. Listen for broken glass when you move the bag.
- Don't compress garbage or reach into garbage containers.

- Use puncture-resistant, liquid-resistant gloves or specially designed tools to pick up overflowing garbage, condoms or sharps.
- Don't let garbage bags get too full. Leave enough free space at the top so that when you grab it, you only grab the top of the bag, not the stuff inside. Lighter bags are also easier to carry away from your body.
- Don't use your hand to hold or support the bottom of the bag.
- Monitor sharps collection disposal containers in public washrooms and replace as needed. Ensure containers are disposed of when the bucket is $\frac{3}{4}$ full.

Sharps Disposal

If a needle/syringe or other medical sharp is found on municipal property the following procedure must be followed.

- Assess the situation and decide what PPE and other equipment will be required.
- Send someone to retrieve the sharps container, tongs, disposable gloves and any other equipment that may be required from the office. Alternately, if you have a radio or cell phone you could contact the office and request they be sent to you.
- Place sharps container on the ground next to the sharp to be collected. Do not hold the container in your hand.
- Use the tongs pick up the sharp and place it in the container (sharp end first).
- After transfer to the sharps container ensure the lid is securely closed.
- Clean tongs using approved disinfecting solution.
- Return container, tongs and any other equipment to the office.
- Safely remove your disposable gloves using the inside-out method: start at the bottom of your hand palm roll them up from the inside so the outside glove is not exposed and place both in the garbage.
- Wash hands with Antimicrobial Hand Rinse.
- Document the incident (Safe Handling of Sharps & Needle Sticks Incident Report).

Spillages of Blood/body Fluid

- Restrict access to the area until clean-up and disinfection is complete.
- Wear disposable gloves to protect your hands.
- Use additional PPE, as needed.

- Clean the affected area thoroughly with an appropriate disinfecting solution, i.e. ten parts water to one part bleach.
- After cleaning, promptly disinfect mops and any other cleaning equipment, otherwise you may contaminate other areas.
- Put all contaminated waste in a Yellow Bag for disposal as clinical waste.
- Document the incident (Safe Handling of Sharps & Needle Sticks Incident Report).

NEED STICK INJURIES / EXPOSURE

If you experienced a needle stick or sharps injury or were exposed to blood or other body fluid during the course of your work, **immediately follow these steps:**

- Remain calm;
- Allow wound to bleed freely, then wash it with soap and water;
- If possible notify supervisor or designate of injury;
- Complete employee incident/first aid report;
- Seek medical assistance;
- Post Exposure Follow-up is to be undertaken by the employee's family physician.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

Every staff person handling sharps is responsible and accountable for disposing of them in an appropriate and safe manner that minimizes risks to themselves, and others.

All policies, procedures, and protective measures regarding the safe use, handling, and disposal of sharps must be adhered to at all times.

Where sharps such as needles are used, it is the responsibility of the staff to ensure that filled sharp containers are properly sealed, secured, not accessible to the general public, and not adjacent to supply storage areas or areas used for food preparation or consumption and clearly marked with the universal bio hazard symbol.

Final disposal can only be carried out by an accredited waste management company.



**The Corporation of the
Municipality of Temagami
Safe Handling of Sharps & Needle Sticks
Incident Report**

Date of Incident:		Time of Incident:
Location of Incident:		
Reported By:		
Type of Sharps:		
Description:		
Actions Taken:		
PPE Used:		
Employee Signature:		Date:
Supervisor Signature:		Date: