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## *Winthrop Harbor Fire Department*

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### **Medical Waste Disposal**

The Winthrop Harbor Fire Department occasionally receives inquiries from residents whether the department can take and dispose of household medical waste. We are unable to dispose of household medical waste; however, we offer these recommendations from The Lake County Health Department Community Health Center on the topic.

To prevent injury, illness and or pollution, use these procedures when disposing of medical sharp objects and other contaminated medical material in your home:

- Place sharp objects such as **Needles, Syringes, Lancets, or other sharp objects** into a hard plastic or metal container with a tight screw-on lid. If you are able, put sharp items in a sturdy, non-recyclable container. You might have containers in your home that will serve that purpose, or get a commercially made container designed for this purpose from a medical supply store or local pharmacy. Many commercial brands are tamper proof and sturdy, which can be disposed of in regular trash.
- **Caution! If you use a non-commercial container, wrap the lid with heavy-duty tape such as duct tape.**
- **Do not put sharp objects in any container you plan on recycling or returning to a store.**
- **Place in the regular trash.** If you only have a recyclable container, do not mix that container with the others to be recycled.
- Other contaminated material such as **soiled bandages, disposable sheets, and medical gloves** can be placed in tightly closed plastic bags before placing in the garbage can with your regular trash.

Home needle destruction devices are available that allow you to safely destroy needles in your home. There are special waste disposal companies who will help dispose of these materials for a fee. **Stericycle, Inc. 800-355-8773** has pick up and mail-back programs. If you need more information about companies offering these services, contact the **Coalition for Safe Community Needle Disposal 800-643-1643 [www.safeneedledisposal.org/](http://www.safeneedledisposal.org/)**

If you need information or would like to speak to someone at the Winthrop Harbor Fire Department, please call 847-872-5957