



**COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**
Division of Environmental Health

Mark J. Hendrickson
Director

2222 "M" Street
Merced, CA 95340
(209) 381-1100
(209) 726-1710 Fax
www.countyofmerced.com

Equal Opportunity Employer

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is medical waste?

Medical waste may be generated as a result of diagnosis, treatment, or immunization of human beings or animals; and meets the definition of biohazardous and/or sharps waste.

What is biohazardous waste?

Biohazardous waste includes, but is not limited to, laboratory waste, microbiology specimens, surgery specimens, infectious animal parts, waste with recognizable fluid blood, waste comprised of pharmaceuticals, waste contaminated with chemotherapeutic agents, and infectious excreta or secretions from humans.

What is sharps waste?

Sharps waste includes, but is not limited to, hypodermic needles, hypodermic needles with syringes, blades, needles with attached tubing, syringes contaminated with biohazardous waste, and broken glass.

Who is required to have a Medical Waste Generator Registration/Permit?

All facilities that produce medical waste are required to register with Merced County Department of Public Health, Division of Environmental Health (MCDEH); this includes but is not limited to dental offices, veterinary and medical clinics, hospitals, and doctor's offices.

For the regulated community, how often are inspections?

Small quantity generators without onsite treatment are exempt from routine inspections. Small quantity generators with onsite treatment are inspected on a biennial basis. Annual inspections are conducted for large quantity generators with and without onsite treatment.

How can I dispose of syringes that I generate from treating myself or family members at home?

As of September 1, 2008 a new law, SB1305, has prohibited the disposal of home-generated sharps into any container used for private or commercial collection of solid waste, recyclable materials, or green waste. This includes roll-off containers used for the collection of solid waste, construction and demolition debris, green waste, or other recyclable materials. Sharps are now required to be placed in an approved sharps container and managed through an approved home-generated sharps collection site or by using an approved mail-back system.

Merced County provides a **free** program to our community to safely dispose of home-generated sharps. We currently have two locations accepting home-generated sharps within Merced County. We do not accept items with unused or partially used medicines still in the syringes.

Merced Location:

Merced County Community and Economic
Development Department, Division of Environmental
Health / Department of Public Health
260 E. 15th St., Merced, CA 95341

Los Banos Location:

Human Services Agency (HSA)
415 F St., Los Banos, CA 93635

For additional information, please visit to following links:

<https://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/HomeHazWaste/Sharps> (for sharps)

<https://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/HomeHazWaste/Medications> (for medications)

https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/index.html (for medications)