



# MEL SAFETY INSTITUTE SHIFT BRIEFING

November 2017

## Disposal of Improperly Discarded Syringes

**Depending on your department policies, select the option below that best reflects how employees should respond when they discover an improperly discarded syringe. Amend your BBP Exposure Control Plan to reflect these procedures.**

### **OPTION – Do not touch the syringe, but instead notify the proper agency to collect the syringe**

There is a possibility that in the course of cleaning our parks, playgrounds, restrooms, and other places around town, that you may discover a syringe that was left there by someone. The syringe could be used for a lawful purpose, such as by a person with diabetes who was careless, or it could have been dropped by a user of illegal drugs. There is no way of telling which, and either way, it does not matter. ALL syringes and other contaminated sharps will be treated as follows:

1. DO NOT HANDLE OR PICK UP THE SYRINGE.
2. Secure the area so that no one intentionally or accidentally come in contact with the syringe. This can mean standing there, placing a cone over it, or by some other means. You can imagine a child in the park, investigating what you were doing and the potentially disastrous outcome if they find the syringe.
3. Call **WHO** [Identify the department your agency will notify to come and properly pick-up and dispose of the syringe and provide the phone number. Also give after- hours or emergency contact numbers.]
4. Notify your supervisor and continue to maintain control of the area until the syringe is removed.

### **OPTION – Pick-up the syringe and dispose of it properly**

There is a possibility that in the course of cleaning our parks, playgrounds, restrooms, and other places around town, that you may discover a syringe that was left there by someone. The syringe could be used for a lawful purpose, such as by a person with diabetes who was careless, or it could have been dropped by a user of illegal drugs. There is no way of telling which, and in the end, it does not matter. ALL syringes and other contaminated sharps will be handled in this manner:

1. NEVER INTENTIONALLY HANDLE A SYRINGE WITH YOUR HANDS, EVEN IF WEARING GLOVES. You must use a tool, such as pliers or a piece of paper / cardboard to pick up a syringe. [Demonstrate sliding paper / cardboard under a syringe.]
2. After picking up the syringe with a tool, drop it into a puncture-resistant container such as a soda or ice-tea bottle with a wide mouth and screw-on cap. [Departments may consider providing proper sharps containers, such as a plastic or cardboard sharp shuttle for employees.]
3. If you are using a make-shift container, place a label on it. [Departments should have a supply of red biohazard labels. HOLD UP A SAMPLE LABEL.]
4. Tape the lid or cap in place and you can then throw the bottle in a normal trash container – not a recycling container.
5. Notify your supervisor of the incident.

**If you do stick yourself with the syringe, immediately report it to your supervisor**

This lesson plan is intended for general information purposes only. It should not be construed as legal advice or legal opinion regarding any specific or factual situation. Always follow your organization's policies and procedures as presented by your manager or supervisor. For further information regarding this bulletin, please contact your Safety Director at 877.398.3046.

