

Press Release from the Health Dept.
For the Belmont Citizen-Herald
For May 13, 2010

NEW NEEDLE DISPOSAL POLICY

Starting July 1, 2010, Massachusetts is banning all sharps (needles/syringes and lancets) from disposal in the regular trash. Residents will no longer be able to put needles/syringes and lancets in detergent bottles or coffee cans and put them in their regular trash. The Health Department has been discussing some disposal options with its Minuteman Hazardous Product Facility partners as well as the Department of Public Works.

A new procedure has recently been approved by the Board of Health and the Board of Selectmen. Residents will be able to purchase a red two gallon approved sharps container from the Health Department during regular business hours for a \$10 fee. The container will be marked "Paid" on the outside and, when full, it can be returned to the Health Dept. and put in an approved disposal box locked in the Director's office. When full, that box will be picked up by a licensed medical waste hauler.

"The \$10 fee is designed to cover both the cost of the container and the cost of the disposal," states Health Director, Donna Moultrup. "We hope that both the residents' and the Town's budgets will not be greatly impacted by this plan."

The kick-off of this new procedure will be TOWN DAY, MAY 22ND. The Health Department will have a display table with information and sharps containers for sale. Residents who currently have sharps in unapproved containers can either dispose of them in the old-fashioned way in their regular trash **only until July 1st** OR purchase an approved container and transfer the sharps that they have to that container.

SHARPS IN UNAPPROVED CONTAINERS MUST NEVER BE BROUGHT TO THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT. They cannot be accepted or transferred to the approved container on Town property. The container must be purchased at the Health Department, filled at home and then returned to the Health Department. The resident will be asked to place the closed and locked container in the disposal box in the Director's office to minimize handling of the container.

Small one quart approved sharps containers, usually received with a ten day supply of injectable medicine after a surgery, can just be brought to the Health Department for disposal when a resident completes the medication. No commercial sites, such as physicians and dentists, may use this disposal option; this procedure will be **for residential disposal only**.

After Town Day, the Health Department will have approved sharps containers for sale at its office on the 2nd floor of the Homer Municipal Building, 19 Moore St, Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 4 PM. The cost is \$10 by check or cash only. You can bring the containers for disposal to the same location during the same time period.

Questions can be addressed to the Health Dept. staff at 617-993-2720.