

Community Sharps Management Policy

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Policy owner:	Manager Regulatory City Compliance Services
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Sharps are devices used to penetrate the skin and include needles, syringes and lancets. Community sharps are generated in a wide range of non-clinical situations, including residential and commercial property, public areas and public facilities. Inappropriate disposal may represent a risk to Council employees, contractors, the community, and the environment.

Under legislation “sharps waste” is a type of hazardous clinical waste as defined in the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997. As community sharps waste does not fall specifically within this definition, it comes under the definition of “solid waste.” Council is responsible for the proper management and disposal of solid waste.

Purpose

This policy aims to maintain high standards of workplace safety, public health and safety, and environmental management through the disposal of community sharps. This is achieved by

- Encouraging broad community participation in the safe disposal of community sharps by providing and promoting accessible community sharps disposal options
- Reducing the potential for needle stick injuries to occur by providing information, training, personal protective equipment and responsive management.
- To provide mechanisms for the management of sharps in the community to maximise appropriate community sharps disposal.

Scope

This policy applies to the whole community and the entire Wagga Wagga Local Government Area.

Policy Provisions

General Provisions

Council will work in partnership with the community and other stakeholders to:

- Provide and maintain high standards of public and workplace health and safety that comply with or exceed the requirements of all relevant legislation, through the effective management of community sharps.
- Provide services and infrastructure that maximise appropriate community sharps disposal and minimise the potential for needle stick injuries to occur to workers, community members, or visitors.

- Regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of objectives, strategies and actions for the management of community sharps.

Responsibilities

Wagga Wagga City Council will:

- Encourage broad community participation in the safe disposal of community sharps by providing and promoting accessible and affordable community sharps disposal options.
- Reduce the potential for needle stick injuries to occur by providing information, training, personal protective equipment to staff.
- Provide responsive management systems to the community.
- Monitor for effective performance.
- Meet Guideline requirements and community expectations through effective performance management.

Related Documents

- Community Strategic Plan 2050
- NSW Community Sharps Guidance
- Work Health & Safety Act 2011
- Wagga Wagga City Council Safe Operating Procedure – Sharps Collection and Disposal.
- Protection of the Environment Operation Act 1997
- Protection of the Environment Operations (waste) Regulation 2014

Definitions

Term	Definition
Community Sharps	As outlined in NSW Community Sharps Guidance, Community Sharps are defined as “Sharps that are generated by community members through self-administered healthcare or recreation. This includes needles, syringes, lancets and finger prickers used at private residences and in public places that are not placed in a designated sharps container provided by a business, commercial or community service”

Revision History

Revision number	Council resolution	Council meeting date
1	Res No 05/66	29 March 2005
2	Res No: 09/077	27 July 2009
3	E-Team	11 December 2012
4	Res No: 13/224.1	26 August 2013

Revision number	Council resolution	Council meeting date
5	E-Team	1 August 2017
6	Res No: 17/279	28 August 2017
7	General Manager under delegated authority	24 June 2021
8	Res: 22/354	17 October 2022