



LOUISE WILSON, MS, BSN, RN, NCSN

# School Nurse Update

#16 4/30/19

IN THIS ISSUE

Spring Greetings!

In this issue of the Update, school nurses will find materials created by the National Association of School Nurses to recognize and celebrate **National School Nurse Day, May 8, 2019**. Also included in this Update are **proclamations from both Governor Tony Evers and State Superintendent Carolyn Stanford Taylor recognizing the contributions of school nurses in Wisconsin**. Consider using any or all of these materials as you use your school nurse voice to **inform your school community regarding how you keep students safe, healthy, and ready to learn!**

At the recent Wisconsin Association of School Nurses (WASN) conference, WASN presented its awards. As we reflect on how school nurses contribute to their school communities, it is a great time to **recognize and celebrate excellence!** **Gretchen Forbes, MA, BSN, RN, NCSN** School Nurse from Madison Metropolitan School District received the ***Katheryn Etter School Nurse of the Year*** award. **Lisa Jensen, BSN, RN, NCSN** School Nurse Program Coordinator Fort HealthCare received the ***School Nurse Administrator of the Year***. **Rose Dolatowski, MSN, RN** was honored with the ***School Nurse Advocacy*** award.

In preparing for this Update I was reading through my list serves and noted several items worth passing on. One is the **new product for ADHD that the FDA recently approved**. As Shelia Caldwell BSN, RN, CSN-NJ pointed out, school nurses need to be aware of this product as students may be presenting to the health office with marks on their foreheads due to use of this device. Another posting and subsequent reading caught my eye; **acute wound management: revisiting the approach to assessment, irrigation, and closure considerations**. With a link to: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3047833/>. For anyone who says school nurses simply apply Band-Aids, I challenge them to read this article (you might use it for School Nurse Day). **Much knowledge goes into assessing and caring for wounds as demonstrated by this article.**

May you **celebrate your own excellence** on National School Nurse Day, next week!

## School Nurse Day Resources

**Mental Health Resources for Self-Care of Health Care Professionals**

**Vaccine Preventable Disease Summaries**

**E-Cigarettes Causing Seizures**

**WAC's New Website**

**PRACTICE POINTS- Sharps Disposal**

## SAVE THE DATE

**National Association of School Nurses Conference- June 28- July 1, Denver, CO [Registration now open!](#)**

**Marathon County Health Skills Day- August 8, 2019**

**School Nurse Summer Institute- Transgender Youth - August 9, 2019 - Madison Holiday Inn**

**DPI New School Nurse Orientation- October 17-18, 2019 Stevens Point Holiday Inn**



## DPI News

The Department of Public Instruction in conjunction with the Coalition for Expanding School-Based Mental Health announces the **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Growing School Mental Health Summit**. See flyer for details. The Summit is June 18, 2019 in Stevens Point. This summit offers the latest innovations in school mental health and facilitates connections to build school/community partnerships for your students.

[Use of Delegation in the School Setting](#) is now published online and available for downloading. School nurses will want to read this 2019 document and replace the 2009 version. This revision answers several new Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ). New FAQs include the difference between basic and complex patient care situations and is medication administration a delegated act in Wisconsin.

The link is on the [Resources](#) page of the [DPI School Nursing and Health Services](#) website.

### Data from 2017/18 Third Friday Count\*

- ❑ 422 Wisconsin public school districts
- ❑ 860,138 public school students (17/18)
- 260 public school districts reported data on school nurses
- 5 CESAs; 3 County CDEs; and 2 state schools
- ❑ 487.5 School Nurse FTEs
- ❑ 17.65 School Nurse FTEs funded by CESAs
- 576 School Nurses (not FTE's) serving Wisconsin public school students
- ❑ 1:1617 is MEDIAN school nurse to public school students ratio in districts that have a school nurse



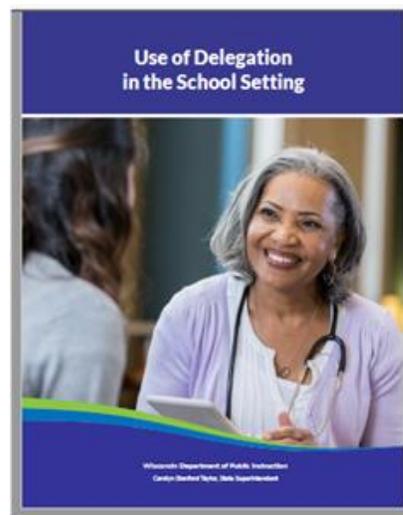
\* As reported by individual school districts

### Data from 2017/18 Third Friday Count\*

- 195 public school districts did not report any school nurse FTE's
- Missing data: The number of districts that are using Public Health or Private Health Care Providers is not counted into the nurse:student ratios. DPI only receives information on district-hired school nurses.



\* As reported by individual school districts



### Resource for Health Care Professionals to Promote Their Own Mental Health

EduMed.org is launching a new campaign to help medical students and professionals maximize their mental health and wellness. Why is this important? Many students and professionals in healthcare deal with demanding schedules and/or traumatic events, which can lead to anxiety, sleeplessness, chronic stress, and other difficult challenges.

To help, we've created a guidebook that addresses these issues, and includes common signs a person needs help, places he or she can find that help, and tools and techniques anyone can use to take charge of their own mental wellness. You can check out the complete guide here:

Mental health & wellness for medical professionals: <https://www.edumed.org/resources/mental-health/>



### **Measles Outbreaks Update**

From January 1 to April 4, 2019, [465 people from 19 states](#) have been reported as having measles. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) urges healthcare professionals to ensure that all patients are up to date on MMR vaccine, including before international travel.

For more information, including guidelines for patient evaluation, diagnosis and management, visit our [measles webpage](#).

### **Vaccine-Preventable Diseases Summaries for 2018**

The [2018 Vaccine-Preventable Diseases Surveillance Summary](#) is now available. This document summarizes vaccine-preventable diseases in Wisconsin in 2018 and includes historical data for comparison.

Additionally, counts for [vaccine-preventable diseases in Wisconsin](#) are now finalized for 2018.

### **Weekly Respiratory Report**

[The Weekly Respiratory Report](#) for the week ending on April 20, 2019, is now available.

### **Safety Reporting to FDA: E-Cigarette Use Causing Seizures**

FDA has become aware that some people who use e-cigarettes have experienced seizures, with most reports involving youth or young adult users. Seizures or convulsions are known potential side effects of nicotine toxicity and have been reported in the scientific literature in relation to intentional or accidental swallowing of e-liquid. However, a recent uptick in voluntary reports of adverse experiences with tobacco products that mentioned seizures occurring with e-cigarette use (e.g., vaping) signal a potential emerging safety issue. FDA continues to monitor all adverse experiences reported to the agency about the use of e-cigarettes. School nurses can help by reporting cases of individuals who use e-cigarettes and have had a seizure via the online Safety Reporting Portal.

### **From Medscape Nurses**

#### **Commentary- More Bad News About Dietary Supplements**

It may surprise patients, and some health professionals, that the FDA's legal authority to oversee the supplement industry is far inferior to its power to regulate the pharmaceutical industry. Unlike new prescription drugs, supplements do not need to be submitted to the FDA for review or the efficacy and safety before being marketed and sold. [Read more...](#)



### How IPM Can Help Keep Children Safe from Lyme Disease at Schools and in Suburban Communities

Tuesday, May 8, 2019  
1 p.m. ET

Join our panel of experts to discuss the threats posed by ticks and tick-borne disease on school grounds and in suburban communities, and how school nurses can help children minimize their risk. We'll provide an up-to-date overview of practical knowledge and tips, along with a discussion of where the research is headed.

[Register](#)



### News from NASN...

National School Nurse Day will be celebrated on May 8, 2019.

Since 1972, National School Nurse Day has been set aside to recognize school nurses, and to foster a better understanding of the role of school nurses in the educational setting.

NASN has created a [number of resources](#) to help celebrate you and the nurses in your school.

[Download this icon](#) to share on your school's website or social media to show your support, and make sure to use the official hashtag, #SND2019, to spread the good news about work school nurses are doing every day to keep children healthy, safe and ready to learn.



### FDA permits marketing of first medical device for treatment of ADHD

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration on April 19, 2019 permitted marketing of the first medical device to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The prescription-only device, called the Monarch external Trigeminal Nerve Stimulation (eTNS) System, is indicated for patients ages 7 to 12 years old who are not currently taking prescription [ADHD medication](#) and is the first non-drug treatment for ADHD granted marketing authorization by the FDA. [Read more...](#)

### Patient video tutorials released

The American Lung Association released a new set of video tutorials for patients, including [How to Properly Use a Nebulizer](#) and [How to Properly Clean a Nebulizer](#).

The 30th Annual Children Come First Conference  
**“COOPERATION”**  
 November 11 - 12, 2019 • Glacier Canyon Lodge, Wisconsin Dells  
[www.ccfconference.org](http://www.ccfconference.org)

Save the Date!

Presented by:  
 Wisconsin Family Ties

**MONA DELAHOOKE**

Mona Delahooke, Ph.D., is a nationally-known licensed clinical psychologist with more than 25 years of experience caring for young children and their families. In her private practice she consults with parents, preschools, regional centers, and school districts in the areas of screening, assessment, intervention and support for families with young children. She is the author of the bestseller *Social and Emotional Development in Early Intervention, A Skills Guide for Working with Children*. Dr. Delahooke believes parents and professionals gain the strongest developmental roadmap possible by understanding how each child's unique, individual differences can guide treatment while cultivating joy in the parent-child relationship.



**DAVID ROMANO**

David Romano, works with children, adolescents and families as a social worker in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and has been a mental health advocate for the past 25 years. In his work as an Active Minds speaker and advocate, he has collaborated with many organizations including the National Institute of Mental Health. David lives with depression and, in high school, experienced the dark lows of self-injury and a suicide attempt. Now living in recovery, he has committed his life to letting others, especially men, know that it isn't a weakness to ask for help. David encourages audiences to embrace who they are and to support each other in eliminating the stigma attached to mental illness.



[The 30th Annual Children Come First Conference](#) –

November 11 & 12, 2019

[Registration is Open!!!](#)



**Alliance launches new website**

**Celebrating 25 years as Wisconsin's voice for children's health**

2019 marks the 25th anniversary of Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin. As we celebrate 25 years as Wisconsin's voice for children's health, we are excited to announce our website has a new design with enhanced features.

The new [home page](#) highlights our key initiatives: asthma, early literacy, emergency care, grief and bereavement, injury prevention and death review, medical home, and oral health. Visit our website to learn more about who we are, what we do and how we impact kids' health.

Also, be sure to visit our [newsletter sign up page](#) to stay connected with our initiatives as we continue to work together to ensure Wisconsin children are healthy, safe and able to thrive.

**Sign up for the new WAC membership portal**

In addition to the new Alliance website, the Wisconsin Asthma Coalition is pleased to introduce a new membership portal. The membership portal is just one part of our WAC revitalization plan. It will serve as a place for coalition members to discuss asthma-related topics, pose questions to fellow members and share information about asthma challenges, innovations and events statewide. [Sign up now](#) to access the membership portal.

**Allergies and Asthma webinar to be held April 30**

Starting this month, WAC plans to host monthly asthma-related webinars for members. Our first webinar, Allergies and Asthma, on April 30 comes just in time for allergy season! This webinar aims to help clinicians, caregivers and other stakeholders reduce and manage allergy-related asthma risks.

Our presenter, Tara Bruner, MHS, PA-C, has been a physician assistant for more than 10 years. Currently, Ms. Bruner is an adjunct professor at Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas and a clinical educator at ThermoFisher Scientific. Ms. Bruner works with numerous state and national organizations to increase patient access to health care. [Register for the webinar](#) on the new WAC membership portal.



Another topic that caught my eye on the discussion lists was the disposals of sharps in the school setting. One school nurse responded that she used plaster of paris to make a hardened mass of the sharps and unused epinephrine auto-injectors and disposed of them in the regular trash. How ingenious I thought, but then wondered if that would be legal in Wisconsin? It is not!

Wisconsin's medical waste disposal regulations are managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Wisconsin law (Chapter NR 526) requires everyone to dispose of sharps separately from other waste. It is illegal to put sharps in the trash or with recyclables. This minimizes injuries and enables the recovery of valuable materials. When sharps are found in recyclables, whole loads of recyclables must be landfilled instead. The DNR has several resources to help households and non-medical facilities understand how to dispose of sharps and other infectious waste. Schools would follow these guidelines as most (all?) do not produce 50 pounds of infectious waste every year. I found several Wisconsin county public health departments also have information and resources for the safe disposal of used and unused sharps.

School nurses often advise school district administration on the implementation of blood borne pathogen protocols. Proper and safe disposal of used and unused sharps is an area on which school nurses may have questions as evidenced by the discussion on the list serv. To help reduce the risk of injury, follow these steps to get medical sharps ready for safe disposal:

- Place the sharps in rigid puncture-resistant containers with secure lids or caps. Acceptable containers include commercially available sharps containers or thick-walled plastic detergent or bleach bottles with screw caps. Unacceptable containers include coffee cans (the lids are too easily punctured), plastic milk jugs, plastic bags, aluminum cans and soda bottles. NOTE: DO NOT add bleach to the container. Bleach may not completely disinfect needles, and it could spill and injure you or waste handlers.
- Clearly label the sharps container with the words "bio-hazard", "infection waste" or "sharps." It is also acceptable to label detergent or bleach bottles with the words "Do Not Recycle" so it is not accidentally included with recyclables. You can also [print this label](#) created by the Outagamie County Health Department and tape it to your collection container.
- When the container is almost full take it to a registered sharps disposal site. Access the DNR [website](#) for locations. Many healthcare facilities also accept sharps but are not required to register with the DNR. Ask your healthcare provider, clinic or local hospital if you can bring sharps to their location for disposal. Sharps mail-back programs are available online. The company may provide containers and packaging that meet U.S. postal regulations. Charges may apply.
  - For large quantities (50 pounds or more), hire a [licensed infectious waste hauler \[PDF\]](#).
  - For small quantities up to 50 pounds, you may transport the sharps to an infectious waste treatment facility yourself. If you do transport sharps, use a proper container and put the container in the trunk or another enclosed part of your vehicle.

Here are some helpful websites if you want more information;

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/HealthWaste/HouseholdSharps.html>

[SafeNeedleDisposal.org](http://SafeNeedleDisposal.org)

<https://www.outagamie.org/home/showdocument?id=58224>

School Nurse Webpage: [https://dpi.wi.gov/osps/pupil\\_services/school\\_nurse](https://dpi.wi.gov/osps/pupil_services/school_nurse)

To join the School Nurse Email List and receive school nursing updates and information send an email to [join-schoolnurse@lists.dpi.wi.gov](mailto:join-schoolnurse@lists.dpi.wi.gov)



# STATE of WISCONSIN



OFFICE of the GOVERNOR

## Proclamation

*WHEREAS*, families deserve to feel confident that their kids will be cared for when they are at school; and

*WHEREAS*, school nurses support the health and educational success of children and youth by providing access to care when a kid's cognitive development is at its peak; and

*WHEREAS*, students today face more complex and life-threatening health problems, both physical and mental, requiring care in school; and

*WHEREAS*, school nurses have served a critical role in improving public health and ensuring student academic success for more than 100 years; and

*WHEREAS*, school nurses address the home and community factors, for example, social determinants that affect students' health; and

*WHEREAS*, school nurses are professional nurses that advance the well-being, academic success, and life-long achievements of all students by serving on the frontlines and providing a critical safety net for our nation's most fragile kids; and

*WHEREAS*, school nurses act as a liaison to the school community, families, and healthcare providers by promoting wellness and improving health outcomes for our nation's kids; and

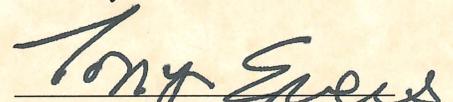
*WHEREAS*, school nurses understand the link between health and learning and are in a position to make a positive difference for children every day;

*NOW, THEREFORE*, I, Tony Evers, Governor of the State of Wisconsin,  
do hereby proclaim May 8, 2019 as

### NATIONAL SCHOOL NURSE DAY

throughout the State of Wisconsin and I commend this observance to all of our citizens.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Madison this 29<sup>th</sup> day of March 2019.

  
TONY EVERS  
GOVERNOR

By the Governor:

  
DOUGLAS LA FOLLETTE  
Secretary of State



## Five Ways a School Nurse Benefits the School

**Attendance - School nurses** improve attendance through health promotion, disease prevention and disease management. Students with a full-time school nurse have about half the student illness- or injury-related early releases from school where no school nurse is present.

**Academics** – Improved attendance means the healthy student is in the classroom and ready to learn. **School Nurses** enable better performance, which also contributes to reducing drop-out rates.

**Time** – **School nurses** save time for principals, teachers and staff. A school nurse in the building saves principals, teachers, and clerical staff a considerable amount of time that they would have spent addressing health concerns of students.

**A school nurse** in the building saves:

- Principals almost an hour a day
- Teachers almost 20 minutes a day
- Clerical staff over 45 minutes a day

**Staff Wellness - School nurses** improve the general health of staff. According to school reports, principals, teachers, and clerical staff are **VERY** satisfied with having school nurses in their schools for several reasons:

- Teachers can focus on teaching
- Office staff spend less time calling parents and sending students home
- Healthy staff means increased attendance and productivity

**Accountability - School nurses** help schools stay accountable.

- Promoting compliance with federal and state law mitigates lawsuits
- Advocating for adequate staffing aligns with Healthy People 2020 recommendations of the ratio of one school nurse per 750 well students (1:750)
- Preparing for emergencies saves lives and property
- Addressing student mental health links to academic achievement

**School nurses** are instrumental in the identification and referral to community resources for health risks and are often the only health professional who see students on a regular basis.

**School nurses are responsible for:**

- Significantly decreasing the amount of days missed due to asthma, the leading cause of school absenteeism, accounting for more than 14 million missed days annually
- Managing students with chronic conditions such as diabetes and seizures to allow them to stay in class
- Identifying and treating accidents and injuries
- Counseling students about physical and emotional issues

**Healthy Children = Academic Success**  
[www.nasn.org](http://www.nasn.org)

### **School Nurses Economic Value**

- ✓ Provide health services that increase school attendance
- ✓ Prevent and control the spread of communicable disease
- ✓ Administer specialized services to students (medications, insulin pumps, ventilators, tube feedings)
- ✓ Verification of immunizations
- ✓ Screening and make referrals for vision, hearing, BMI
- ✓ Provide health professional input and direction for school and community policies and programs
- ✓ Educate students and staff on managing their own health and wellness

## References

- Allen, G. (2003). The impact of elementary school nurses on student attendance. *Journal of School Nursing*, 10(4), 225-231.
- Baisch, M.J., Lundeen, S.P., & Murphy, M.K. (2011). Evidence-based research on the value of school nurse in an urban school system. *Journal of School Health*, 81(2), 74-80. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1746-1561.2010.00563.x/abstract>
- Engelke, M., Guttu, M., Warren, M., & Swanson, M. (2008). School nurse case management for children with chronic illness: Health, academic, and quality of life outcomes. *The Journal of School Nursing*, 24(4), 205-214.
- Fauteux, N. (2011). Unlocking the Potential of School Nursing: Keeping Children Healthy, In School, and Ready to Learn. *Charting Nursing's Future*, 14, 1-8. Retrieved from <http://www.rwjf.org/files/research/cnf14.pdf>
- Levy, M., Heffner, B, Stewart, T., & Beeman, G. (2006). The efficacy of asthma case management in an urban school district in reducing school absences and hospitalizations for asthma. *Journal of School Health*, 76(6), 320-324
- Puskar, K. & Bernardo, L. (2007). Mental health and academic achievement: Role of school nurses. *Journal of Specialists in Pediatric Nursing*, 12(4), 215-223.

**MAY 8, 2019**



# NATIONAL SCHOOL NURSE DAY

**School Nurses:  
Making the Grade on School Health**

## Celebrate Your School Nurse!

---

(School Nurse Name)



# 4th Annual **GROWING** SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH SUMMIT

TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2019 | STEVENS POINT, WI

## GROW WITH US!

The 4th Annual Growing School Mental Health Summit is an opportunity for school, provider, county and parent partners from around the state to come together to learn and share best practices in creating comprehensive, sustainable, school-based mental health systems. This year's Summit will feature learning tracks and breakout sessions highlighting models and best practices to more effectively serve the children and families we all share in common.



## KEYNOTE

**Implementing Culturally Responsive School Mental Health Programs: Building a Foundation for Racial Justice**

*Armando Hernandez,  
Assistant Director of  
Integrated Health,  
Madison Metropolitan  
School District*

## A SAMPLING OF THE BREAKOUTS

- ◇ Referral Pathways: Best Practices in Managing Referrals and Coordinating Care
- ◇ Innovative Funding for School Mental Health
- ◇ Best Practices in the Evolution of a School Mental Consortium
- ◇ Strategic Planning for More Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems (for school/community teams)
- ◇ Take Care of Our Grown-up Brains w/ Mindfulness Meditation
- ◇ Immigration Status and Trauma



*\$60 Early  
Bird Special (After  
May 1, registration  
fee is \$70)*



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

Coalition for Expanding  
**School-Based  
Mental Health**

# 4th Annual GROWING



TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2019 | STEVENS POINT, WI

DPI's *Creating Safe & Supportive School Communities Social & Emotional Learning Symposium* follows on June 20-21 at the same location.

## TRACKS TO GUIDE YOUR LEARNING

Spend your time in one of the learning tracks or move through a variety of breakout sessions.

**TRACK - Equity in School Mental Health**

**TRACK - Strategic Planning for More Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems (SHAPE System - intensive for school / community teams learn from national experts and Wisconsin practitioners)**

**TRACK - Best Practice in School Mental Health**

**TRACK - Implementation of School Mental Health**

**TRACK - Sustainability of School Mental Health**



*\$60 Early Bird Special (After May 1, registration fee is \$70)*



Coalition for Expanding  
**School-Based  
Mental Health**  
in Wisconsin

AGENDA-IN-BRIEF

7:45 — 8:30	Registration, Networking, Breakfast
8:30 — 8:45	Welcome & Coalition Update
8:45 — 10:15	Keynote — Equity and School Mental Health
10:15 — 10:30	Break
10:30 — 11:45	Breakout Session #1
11:45 — 12:45	Lunch
12:45 — 2:00	Breakout Session #2
2:00 — 2:15	Break
2:15 — 3:30	Breakout Session #3

# Protect Yourself, Protect Your Community



## Safe Options for Household Sharps Disposal

### DON'T

- Put needles and lancets in the trash
- Put needles and lancets in recycling containers
- Take needles and lancets to medication collections
- Flush needles and lancets down the toilet

### DO

- Package needles and lancets safely
- Dispose of needles and lancets using one of the options listed on this poster

### Package needles and lancets safely:

- Recap your own discarded sharps or clip the needle points.
- Put the sharps in a rigid, puncture-resistant container with a secure lid or cap.
- Clearly label the container with the words "bio-hazard," "infectious waste," or "sharps."
- When the container is full, seal it and dispose of it safely with one of the options below.

### Use one of these safe disposal options:

- Bring the container to a registered sharps collection station. Go to [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) and search "healthcare waste" to find a station near you.
- Ask your doctor, clinic or local hospital if you can bring sharps to their location for disposal.
- Call your local pharmacy, public health department, solid waste department, or streets department to learn about other local disposal options.
- Use a sharps mail-back program.

### What are the dangers of used sharps?

Used needles and lancets can stick waste disposal workers when they are thrown away in the trash or recycling, brought to medication collections, or flushed down the toilet. Any worker accidentally stuck with a needle must get expensive medical testing and worry about the possibility of harmful or deadly diseases such as Hepatitis and HIV. However, needle-stick injuries are a preventable health risk. Package and dispose of sharps safely to avoid exposing yourself and others to harm.

For more information on managing medical sharps, go to [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) and search "**healthcare waste.**"



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources • Waste and Materials Management Program • PO Box 7921 • Madison, WI 53707

For more information on managing household medical sharps, contact [DNRWasteMaterials@Wisconsin.gov](mailto:DNRWasteMaterials@Wisconsin.gov) or 608-266-2111.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services, and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan.

If you have any questions, please write to Equal Opportunity Office, Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

This publication is available in alternative format upon request. Please call 608-266-2111 for more information.

PUB WA-1636-2013



## YOUR LOCAL DISPOSAL OPTIONS:

---

## For more information

Disposing sharps properly is not only the right thing to do, it is the law. Follow these simple guidelines and keep everyone in the community safe from needlestick injuries.

For more information and guidance on disposing animal health sharps, talk with a veterinarian or the waste management specialist in a local DNR office.

Information on the laws regarding sharps disposal and answers to basic questions on waste management are also available by contacting:

### WI Department of Natural Resources

Website: <http://dnr.wi.gov>  
(search for "Healthcare waste")

Email: [DNRMedicalWaste@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DNRMedicalWaste@wisconsin.gov)

Phone: (608) 266-2111

---

*This brochure (DNR publication WA840) is a joint project by the*

Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association  
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

University of Wisconsin-Extension  
Cooperative Extension

University of Wisconsin-Madison  
Department of Animal Sciences

Updated July, 2012

---

Brought to you by



To print additional copies of this brochure, visit [www.wvma.org](http://www.wvma.org)

---

---

Wisconsin laws on  
animal medical waste



Stick  
to  
the  
rules

---

How to keep  
everyone safe by  
disposing of needles  
properly

Sharps (needles, syringes and lancets) are used on animals every day. For example, dairy cows receive vaccinations, and diabetic dogs and cats receive insulin injections. Although some human bloodborne pathogens are not a concern with veterinary waste, sharps that have been used on animals can still pose a human health hazard. Additionally, pharmaceutical residue remaining on sharps can be dangerous to humans who sustain an accidental needle stick injury.

## What's the danger?

When sharps are disposed of improperly, they pose an unnecessary concern to garbage haulers and employees. If someone is stuck by a needle from garbage or recyclables, they won't know if the needle was used on a human or an animal or if it carries any diseases. **All** needlestick injuries result in expensive testing and can cause long-term emotional distress for the person who was stuck by the needle because of the possibility that he or she may get a disease like HIV or Hepatitis B.



## It's the law

Wisconsin law requires everyone to dispose of sharps separately from other waste. This minimizes injuries and enables the recovery of valuable materials. When sharps are found in recyclables, whole loads of recyclables must be landfilled instead.

Sharps cannot be disposed with:

- Household waste
- Farm waste
- Recyclable materials (glass, metal, plastic containers, etc.)

## How to dispose of sharps

Safely packaging sharps used on animals for disposal involves three basic steps.

### 1. Place the sharps in rigid, puncture resistant containers with secure lids or caps.

Acceptable containers include:

- Containers specifically for sharps
- Heavy plastic detergent or bleach bottles with screw caps

Unacceptable containers include:

- Coffee cans (the lids are too easily punctured)
- Plastic milk jugs
- Plastic bags
- Pop cans or soda bottles

For containers specifically for sharps, ask a pharmacist or check with local farm supply stores for availability.

### 2. Visibly label the sharps container "Biohazard," "Infectious waste," or "Sharps."

If using a detergent bottle, it is a good idea also to label it "Do not recycle."



### 3. When the container is full or the sharps need to be disposed of, seal and label it, store it out of the reach of children, and dispose of it properly.

As long as the container is being used and it isn't full, it can be kept for an unlimited time. When disposing of the container, do not put it out with other trash. Take it to a registered sharps

collection station, or talk with a veterinarian about possible outlets for disposing of sharps. Some sharps disposal locations may charge fees for disposal.



### Locations for disposing sharps

*Before attempting to drop off sharps at a location, always call ahead and make sure they will take them and inquire if there is a fee.*

- Go to the DNR website, <http://dnr.wi.gov>.
- Search for "healthcare waste".
- Under the heading "Households" click on "Medical sharps". The link to the list is under the "collection stations" tab.
- Please note that businesses, such as livestock farms, need to follow infectious waste requirements under the heading "Non-households."

Consult the yellow pages under "waste disposal" or "medical waste" for sharps disposal locations. If transporting more than 50 pounds of medical waste per month, a license from the DNR is required. For more information, call (608) 266-2111.