**SOP: Sharps Waste**

**Sharps waste is regulated by state law and must not be disposed of in the regular waste stream.** The term "sharps" refers to items used to puncture or cut body parts and that, in a waste container, can cause punctures or cuts to waste handlers. Therefore, all sharps waste must be placed in appropriate sharps containers and decontaminated prior to disposal.

**Always sharps waste:**
- needles, including syringes with needles and IV tubing with needles attached
- syringes without needles when removed from their original sterile containers
- lancets
- scalpel blades

Sharps waste *only if contaminated* with biohazardous material (including recombinant or synthetic DNA/RNA):
- broken glass
- razor blades
- fragile glass tubes, vials, or ampoules including glass Pasteur pipettes
- glass slides and cover slips

**Sharps Waste Packaging**
All sharps waste as defined above must be placed in **red plastic sharps containers labeled with the biohazard symbol.** Sharps containers are available for purchase from Biochemistry stores or from laboratory supply vendors. Use appropriately sized sharps containers and do not fill more than two-thirds full. **When no more than two-thirds full** close the lid and place autoclave tape over the lid and sides. Do not block vent holes. **Label container with Principal Investigator (PI) name and room number.**

All sharps containers must be decontaminated prior to disposal regardless of whether the items are contaminated with biohazardous material. Refer to the [Biohazardous Waste Flow Chart](#) for your location for treatment and disposal information. Remember that sharps waste must be kept separate from other waste streams at all times.

**Site Specific SOP:**
- Place “no more than 2/3rds full” sharps container in the autoclave room in CD046 and **let Van or Jialin** know you have done so.
- Van or Jialin will autoclave the container and transport it to the T-wing for placement in the custodial pick-up zone in T-276.

If a sharps container is punctured or has needles sticking out of it, the entire container must be placed inside a larger sharps container prior to treatment and disposal. Do not attempt to empty a sharps container that has been punctured!