DISPOSAL OF MEDICAL WASTE: SHARPS, PILLS, AND OTHER MEDICATIONS

Syringes and other Sharps
State regulations in effect since 2012 prohibit the disposal of syringes and other sharps used by residents in the household waste. Sharps pose a potential needle-stick injury danger to trash collectors. The Town waste disposal company will not pick up any curbside collection of household waste if it contains sharps.

To enhance compliance with this state regulation, the Town has found a solution for residents to this disposal issue. The Town offers for sale to residents at a price below cost a “sharps disposal system” consisting of an approved 1 gallon-size medical waste container (“red box”) and an appropriately-sized cardboard mailing container. The box is self-addressed to a medical waste disposal company that receives medical waste shipped by mail. The cost of this “system” includes the cost of the medical waste container and pre-payment of the shipping costs and medical waste disposal fees. Residents at their convenience just drop off the box containing the full “red box” at any post office with no postage or other postal services required.

“Sharps Disposal Systems” may be purchased for $35 from the Town Public Health Nurse, Carol Steiner, R.N. (565-4154) from 9:00AM-2:30P.M. daily at her office at the Greenwood Adult Center, 231 Maple Road, Longmeadow, MA. It is advised to call ahead or set an appointment with Ms. Steiner.

A limited number of “sharps disposal systems” are available free of charge or for a small donation for residents of limited financial means.

Oral Medications in Pill Form
The Town has a locked kiosk in the lobby of the Longmeadow Police Station for collection and of medication in pill form. The medication can be deposited into the kiosk in its original storage container (i.e. pill box) or in a zip-locked plastic bag anytime day or night (the station is open 24 hours/day). It is recommended that all personal information on pill boxes be removed or rendered unreadable before inserting in the kiosk. The medications collected in the kiosk are disposed of by the Town as medical waste at no cost to the resident and with a “no questions asked” policy. Unfortunately only medications in pill form and no other types of medications can be disposed of by residents in the kiosk.

Other Types of Medications or Medical Waste
Unfortunately there are no state approved methods currently available to municipalities for the collection and disposal of medications in cream or liquid form nor for inhalers. Such medication is still eligible for disposal in the household waste. Such medication should not be conspicuous view in the load. Also, it is recommended that any identifying personal information be removed on prescriptive medication.