

## Medical Waste Common Inspection Findings

While not all-inclusive, the following items are commonly cited by Santa Clara County during medical and biohazardous waste inspections. **For questions, call EH&S at (650) 723-0448.**

### Containment and Storage of Biohazardous Waste

Bagged biohazardous waste must be in red bags. Do not use orange, pink, or clear autoclave bags.

Biohazard bags must meet both ASTM tests: ASTM D1922 tear resistance and ASTM D1709 impact resistance.



Bagged waste must be stored, handled, and transported in proper containment:

- Rigid hard-sided container
- Leak resistant and have tight-fitting covers
- Kept clean and in good repair
- Labeled on the lid and sides so as to be visible from any lateral direction - must use the words “Biohazardous Waste” or the international biohazard symbol and the word “BIOHAZARD”



### Open and unlidded biohazardous waste bins

Do not leave the lids open and unattended.

Biohazardous waste bins must remain closed to maintain a sanitary working environment and to prevent spillage of contents in the event of an emergency.

Remember to keep all biohazardous waste bins closed when not in use.

- Close or replace lid before you walk away
- Do not overfill bins
- Request a waste pick-up when bins are over 2/3 full



Benchtop biohazardous waste bins in labs and tissue culture rooms must be closed when unattended.

- As a best practice, tie the bag and place it into biohazardous waste bin when your work is complete



### Improper Sharps Disposal

“Sharps waste” are items that have acute rigid corners, edges, or protuberances capable of cutting or piercing, including but not limited to:

- Hypodermic needles with syringes, needles with attached tubing, blades and scalpels, broken glass, Pasteur pipettes

Place contaminated sharps into approved sharps containers only:

- Rigid, puncture-resistant containers with the words “sharps waste” or with the word “BIOHAZARD”



Do not store full sharps containers for more than 30 days.

- Place any broken/damaged, faded, or outdated sharps containers into the biohazardous waste collection bins for immediate pick up



### Open Sharps Containers

Sharps containers without safety trays must remain closed to maintain a sanitary working environment and to prevent spillage of contents in the event of an emergency.

- As a best practice, remember to keep sharps containers closed when not in use
- Close or replace lid before you walk away
- Do not overfill bins and containers
- Request a waste pick-up when bins are over 2/3 full
- Lock filled sharps bins when ready for pick-up

