How to *Safely* Throw Away *Needles* at *Home*

Florida Department of Health
Every day thousands of people have to use needles at home to give themselves life-saving shots. But like your life, needles should be handled carefully.

Remember, someone such as a garbage man or sewage treatment worker, housekeeper or child who is stuck with a needle does not know whether this needle can give them HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis B or C. With only a few easy steps, people at home can avoid accidental injury to themselves or to others by throwing needles away properly.

How to avoid needle sticks:

- **DON'T** throw loose needles into the garbage.
- **DON'T** flush, bury or burn needles.
- **DON'T** put needles into a container that is not strong enough to keep the needles from sticking through the sides.
- **DON'T** use clear plastic or glass containers.
- **DON'T** mix needles with things that you recycle.
- **DON'T** leave needles where other people can get them.

**DO** find out if your county has a program to help you.

Many Florida counties have a needle program. A list of these counties can be found at http://www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/community/biomedical/sharps.htm or by calling 850-245-4277.

**DO** find out about a needle mail-back service.

Some companies sell a container that you can use to mail your needles back to the company. More information about companies that have a needle mail-back service can be found at http://www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/community/biomedical/pdfs/providers.pdf or by calling 850-245-4277.