Safe disposal of used sharps, including hypodermic needles and syringes, is critically important for the health and safety of New Yorkers and the State’s environment. When these sharps come from places other than health care settings—such as individual residences and non-health-related facilities—there are specific considerations and challenges. Fortunately, New York has special programs designed to address them.

1. Syringe Exchange Programs (SEPs): Since 1992, the NYS Commissioner of Health has authorized syringe exchange programs in New York to provide new sterile syringes in exchange for used syringes. Currently there are 25 SEPs operating at 72 sites as well as Peer Delivered Syringe Exchange services. Approximately 3 million syringes are exchanged annually through these programs. SEPs also accept household-generated sharps from non-SEP participants. For more information on site locations and hours of operation, visit: [http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/harm_reduction/needles_syringes/docs/sep_hours_sites.pdf](http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/harm_reduction/needles_syringes/docs/sep_hours_sites.pdf)

2. Hospitals and Nursing Homes Sharps Disposal Program: Since 1993, all hospitals and nursing homes in the state of New York are mandated by law, to accept used sharps from individuals as a free community service. For more information on location and hours of operation, visit: [http://www.health.ny.gov/sharps-collection](http://www.health.ny.gov/sharps-collection)

3. New York State Alternative Sharps Collection Program: Implemented in 2001, a vital component of the Expanded Syringe Access Program (ESAP), is the New York State Alternative Safe Sharps Collection Program. ESAP allows pharmacies, health care practitioners and health care facilities, which have registered with the Department of Health, to sell or furnish up to ten syringes to persons 18 years of age or older without a medical prescription. ESAP providers, are required to provide information on safe disposal options to their clients when selling or furnishing syringes. One of these options is the New York State Alternative Safe Sharps Collection Program.

Through the Alternative Sharps Collection Program, pharmacies, health clinics, community-based organizations, public transportation facilities, airports, housing complexes, police stations, colleges, private, city and federal hospitals, public libraries, town halls, sheriff offices, shelter clinics, a dock, a park, a fire department and other venues have become sites for safe sharps collection. In some sites, the sharps collection kiosk are being placed next to a drug collection kiosk. The Department of Health provides sharps collection kiosks and/or wall-mounted units to most of these sites, at no cost. The Department has also made small personal sharps containers (fitpacks) and 1 qt. sharps containers available to individuals for personal use.

There are over 240 sites in 35 counties registered in the program. Six (6) of the Sharps Collection Programs have registered their mobile van as collection sites. As of July 30th, 183, 693 pounds of used sharps have been reported as collected through this program.

To view the list of alternative collection sites please visit the NYSDOH website or go to: [http://www.health.ny.gov/sharps-collection](http://www.health.ny.gov/sharps-collection). There is an application process for becoming part of this program. Participating organizations are required to comply with State and local hazardous waste regulations. To obtain the application visit: [http://www.health.ny.gov/forms/doh-4275.pdf](http://www.health.ny.gov/forms/doh-4275.pdf)
The Center for Health & Social Research at SUNY Buffalo State in collaboration with the Erie County Department of Health developed the Point.

The Point is a site locator tool developed for the purpose of finding locations statewide and/or near you where you can obtain hypodermic needles and syringes without a prescription, as well as locations where syringes and drugs can be disposed safely in secure and anonymous drop boxes (kiosks).

Through the use of an internet address [http://www.nydropboxes.org](http://www.nydropboxes.org) or [http://www.thepointny.org](http://www.thepointny.org), or the scanning of the QR code to your Smartphone, you can access the locator. The site offers a search function to help find locations near addresses of interest (e.g. home or work) as well as a browse feature where you can navigate in a map to explore where to find these locations. Each location has an automatic link to Google Maps for driving directions so users can easily find and access them. The site contains a resource section for additional information about the ESAP program as well as links to other relevant information (e.g. the 911 Good Samaritan Law). The site is regularly updated to reflect the most current locations for syringe disposal and syringe access.

The locator provides information on locations where an individual can access needles and syringes. Most of the ESAP providers are pharmacies but a few are medical practitioners and Article 28 health care facilities. It also provides information on locations where an individual can dispose of their used needles and syringes. The locations mapped on the site are all hospitals and nursing homes in NYS plus other alternative collection sites like pharmacies, health clinics, community-based organizations, public transportation facilities, airports, housing complexes, police stations, colleges, private, city and federal hospitals, public libraries, town halls, sheriff offices, shelter clinics and other venues. The site includes a Resource Section that provides additional information and links to other relevant programs and events that may be of interest to you.

To the right, you can see a screen shot sample of the sharps collection sites (green markers) and syringe access sites (blue markers) in the 10027 zip code area in New York, NY.