

Reusable Sharps Container Pilot Project

Project Leads: Kelley Etherington, Andy Ng

Sponsor: Environment, Health & Safety

TGIF Mini-Grant: \$1,925 (all funds returned to TGIF in fall 2013, read details below)

Project Theme: Waste Reduction

Project Location

2012 Mini-Grant Application Submission

Status: Discontinued - Project executed but found not feasible (*see September 2013 update below*). Funds returned to TGIF for reallocation to future grant projects.

Project Description: Sharps from medical research laboratories, including needles, blades, and broken glass, are often also considered biohazardous. Sharps containers account for a large portion of the biohazardous waste stream. The change to reusable sharps containers can dramatically reduce the amount of biohazardous waste being generated each year. This pilot project is helping EH&S better understand campus laboratories' needs, and reducing costs associated with purchasing single-use containers while preventing plastic from entering the solid waste stream. Funding will be used to purchase containers and hire a student intern to assist labs with transitioning from disposable sharps containers to reusable sharps containers.

Goals: The goal of this project is to transition from the use of disposable sharps containers to reusable sharps containers. This pilot project seeks to understand the cost benefits of providing reusable sharps containers to laboratories. Since there is a labor cost involved, EH&S will need to determine the affordability of the program. If the pilot proves successful, EH&S will approach University Health Services and other departments to participate in the reuse program on a larger scale.

2013 Project Poster