

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Sharps disposal boxes installed in Eau Claire County

*Project will help community dispose of needles and syringes safely*

**Eau Claire, October 11, 2024** – Eau Claire County residents now have a new option for disposing of needles, lancets, syringes, and other sharps devices.

Several local agencies are partnering to install eight large sharps disposal boxes in Eau Claire County. The project is paid for with funds received in Eau Claire County from the national opioid settlement.

Three sharps disposal boxes have already been installed at:

- **Owen Park**, 501 1st Ave., Eau Claire (outdoors)
- **Wilson Park**, 500 S. Barstow St., Eau Claire (outdoors)
- **Eau Claire County Jail lobby**, 710 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Eau Claire (indoors)

Five additional sharps disposal boxes will be installed in the coming weeks at:

- **Altoona Public Works**, 2000 Spooner Ave., Altoona (outdoors)
- **Big Falls County Park**, 500 N. 110<sup>th</sup> Ave., Eau Claire (outdoors)
- **Coon Fork County Park**, E25501 Cty Hwy CF, Augusta (outdoors)
- **Fairchild Community Center**, 121 Farmer St., Fairchild (outdoors)
- **Augusta City Hall**, 145 W. Lincoln St., Augusta (indoors)



*A newly installed sharps disposal box in Owen Park, Eau Claire.*

The disposal boxes work similarly to the county's existing medication dropboxes. Pull the handle on the front of the container and place unwanted loose sharps or a small container of sharps inside. Close the door, and the sharps will fall down the chute.

The door opening is about 4 inches by 13.5 inches and can accept some personal-sized red biohazard containers. A laundry detergent bottle will not fit.

Members of the public can use the disposal boxes at any time of the day, at no cost. Do **not** place medications and other hazardous material in the sharps disposal boxes. Unused or expired medications should be taken to a free [medication drop-off location](#).

In addition to using these new sharps disposal boxes, community members should talk with their doctor or pharmacist about disposal options via their healthcare system.

“We hope the new sharps disposal program will promote public safety by providing additional locations in Eau Claire County to safely dispose of sharps,” says Sarah Dillivan-Pospisil, Public Health Specialist with the Health Department. “The goal of these boxes is to decrease the number of discarded needles found at parks, roadsides, and outdoor spaces within the county.”

Sharps should always be disposed of properly to reduce the risk of needle sticks, cuts, and puncture wounds. Improperly disposed of sharps put emergency responders, community members, and pets at risk for injury and the spread of infection. For the same reason, do not place sharps in the garbage or recycling, or flush them down the toilet.

The new disposal boxes are for use by individuals only. Businesses that use sharps as part of their operations (dental offices, veterinary services, body art, healthcare, and others) are required to dispose of sharps based on their local, state, and federal regulations.

**Learn more about sharps disposal** by visiting [www.ECHealthAlliance.org/resources](http://www.ECHealthAlliance.org/resources) and scroll to “Eau Claire County Sharps Disposal.”

*The Eau Claire County sharps disposal group is made up of Eau Claire city and county departments, healthcare partners, and community partners who have collaborated to develop and implement a countywide sharps disposal program. Partnering agencies include: Altoona Police Department, Augusta Police Department, Community Development Department, Community Services Park, Forestry & Cemetery, Eau Claire City-County Health Department, Eau Claire County Administration, Eau Claire County Department of Human Services, Eau Claire County Highway Department, Eau Claire County Parks and Forest, Eau Claire County Recycling & Sustainability, Eau Claire County Sheriff's Office, Eau Claire Fire Department, Eau Claire Police Department, Marshfield Clinic Health System, Mayo Clinic Health System, Village of Fairchild, and Vivent Health.*

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