

## Broken Glass and Mirrors

Broken glass and mirrors are most dangerous when individuals don't know they are present.

**Warn people.** If you break glass, or find broken glass, make sure everyone in the area knows the glass is there. After cleaning (see below) put a sign on the garbage can so no one sticks their hand inside. Call the building custodian, tell them that broken glass was placed into the garbage and tell them where the glass was broken/found so they know to clean carefully in that spot.

**Keep uninvolved people out of the area** to prevent their injury and tracking small glass pieces throughout the building.

**Put on heavy gloves** if they are available. Dishwashing gloves will help protect your hands from any small glass fragments while cleaning.

**Carefully pick up large glass pieces.** If they are large enough to be picked up without touching any broken edges, carefully place them onto a stack of paper towels (use at least 5 pieces for this). When you've collected all the large glass, carefully fold the paper towel around the glass before placing everything into the garbage. This will reduce the likelihood of the glass poking through the bag.

**Carefully sweep up the small glass pieces.** If you don't have a broom you can collect the small glass using several pieces of damp, folded paper towels. (Make sure you have enough paper towel to prevent the glass from reaching your gloves.) Press the towels gently onto the glass to capture it.

**If possible, take broken glass outside to the dumpsters immediately. This will reduce the likelihood of anyone accidentally encountering it.**

## Knives

Occasionally knives are found on campus. If you choose to touch the knife, handle it with care to avoid injuring yourself or others. If you are uncomfortable touching the knife, contact the campus police and make sure everyone is aware of its location so no one is accidentally injured.

If you find a folded pocket knife it can be dropped off at the nearest lost and found. Fill out a Campus Police Lost and Found Report, this can be found on the EWU website.

Straight knives can be placed in the biohazard sharps containers.

**If you find a knife with noticeable blood on it, notify the campus police at x7676.**

## Chemically Contaminated Sharps

If you have syringes that were used for chemical research, they must not be placed with the biohazard waste sharps. These should be placed in a separate ridged, plastic container.

Make sure that syringes with incompatible chemicals are not placed into the same container.

## Incident Report

Any time you find sharps on campus, please submit an incident report. These can be found on the EH&S website.

**Environmental Health & Safety**  
002 Martin Hall, Cheney, WA 99004  
P: 509.359.6496 | F: 509.359.4690  
[sites.ewu.edu/ehs/](http://sites.ewu.edu/ehs/)

# SHARPS



Environmental Health and Safety



## Sharps are any object or device that can puncture or cut the skin.



Sharps include:

- Broken glass and mirrors
- Cannulas
- Knives
- Lancets
- Needles and syringes
- Razors and scalpels

Sharps pose a serious risk of injury, infection and disease for individuals who are accidentally stuck or cut by them. Injuries from contaminated sharps can cause infection with bloodborne pathogens such as HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C.

Sharps must be properly handled, packaged, and labeled to prevent accidental contact.



## Biologically Contaminated Sharps

Any sharp that has previously come into contact with another person has the potential for biological contamination. The most common encounter with these sharps are used syringes. However, any sharp you encounter has the potential to be contaminated with biological materials.

Assume any needle, empty syringe<sup>1</sup>, cannula, lancet, razor or scalpel you see on campus is biologically contaminated. Broken glass or mirrors that have blood on them should be treated the same as other biologically contaminated objects.

**Contaminated sharps should be placed into a biohazard sharps container.** These are rigid, red, plastic containers that are found in many bathrooms on campus<sup>2</sup>. If a sharps container is not available, they should be placed into a rigid plastic container that has a secure lid. That container should have a label affixed to it saying “**Biohazard, Sharps, Do Not Recycle**”.



If you find a potentially biologically contaminated sharp you can either carefully dispose of it yourself or contact your building's custodian for assistance.

**If you dispose of it**, take care not to injure yourself. Put on gloves, if available, and use pliers, tongs or a broom and dustpan to move the sharp to an appropriate container. Make sure to wash your hands after disposal, even if you didn't touch the sharp.



**If you contact someone for assistance**, make sure that no one accidentally encounters the sharp while waiting for it to be removed. Let people in the area know that a sharp was found and where it is. Put up a sign to warn people entering the area. If possible try to carefully nudge it to the side of the room/hall it was found in to make it less likely that someone will injure themselves with it.



**<sup>1</sup>If you find a syringe with liquid in it, immediately contact Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) at x2788, x6694, or x6497.**

**<sup>2</sup>If the sharps container is full, contact the building custodian to have it replaced. If your building does not have a sharps container, contact the work order desk at x2245 to have one installed.**