



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chippewa County Public Health Offers Free Sharps Disposal in May – Promoting Community Safety

CHIPPEWA FALLS, Wis., May 7, 2025 – The **Chippewa County Department of Public Health** is **offering free sharps disposal** throughout the month of May. This service provides a safe and responsible way for residents to dispose of used needles and syringes, helping to prevent injuries, protecting sanitation workers, and reducing the spread of disease in our community.

"As our community continues to feel the effects of the HSHS hospital closure, we are committed to providing meaningful support," said Chippewa County Health Officer Brittnay Fortuna. *"Offering free sharps disposal is one way we can help fill that gap and keep our community safe."*

This effort comes in recognition of *International Harm Reduction Day* on May 7, which promotes practical strategies that help reduce the risks and negative impacts associated with health challenges. Whether it's for medical needs or other uses, properly disposing of used needles and syringes protects everyone and helps prevent accidental injuries and the spread of disease. *"The harm reduction approach seeks to offer **Support Without Stigma**, which recognizes that compassion saves lives, while judgment only deepens harm. **Harm reduction saves lives, stigma doesn't,**"* stated Planning and Promotion Specialist JoAnna Bernklau.

Sharps Disposal Drop-Off Details:



Chippewa County Department of Public Health
711 N. Bridge St., Room 121,
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729



Hours:
Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Friday, 7:30 to 11:30 a.m.



Sharps must be placed in **sealed, strong plastic containers** to ensure safe handling.





Research shows that when people are given safe and responsible options, they are more likely to take care of themselves and others. Harm reduction isn't about encouraging bad behavior, it's about meeting people where they are and giving them tools to make better choices, protect their families, and stay healthy.

Those in need of harm reduction resources or other personal care items such as firearm locks, medication disposal bags, Narcan, hygiene supplies, or outdoor safety kits are encouraged to utilize the Public Health Kiosk located at the Chippewa County Jail at 50 Spruce St., Chippewa Falls, WI. All items are free and available 24 hours a day.

To learn more about harm reduction efforts and local support services, visit the Chippewa County Harm Reduction Services webpage: <https://www.chippewacountywi.gov/government/public-health/community-health/harm-reduction>.

This initiative was made possible with support from Marshfield Clinic Health System and the Northwoods Coalition through harm reduction funding.

About the Chippewa County Department of Public Health

The Chippewa County Department of Public Health is a Level III accredited local health department dedicated to its mission to prevent, promote, and protect the health of everyone who lives, learns, works, and plays in Chippewa County. Guided by the values of Partnership, Respect, Innovation, Dedication, and Equity, the department works to strengthen public health through education, outreach, and community collaboration. Its vision is to make Chippewa County the healthiest place to live.

About Chippewa County Healthy Communities

Chippewa County Healthy Communities (formerly Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership) is a community-led coalition working to strengthen the health and well-being of Chippewa County. Guided by its vision of a healthy and thriving community for all, the coalition brings together residents and partners to address local health priorities and promote fair access to resources. Through collaboration, education, and outreach, Chippewa County Healthy Communities supports efforts that help everyone live well.



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