

IRIC Safety Bulletin

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Use of Sharps Bins

What happened?

IRIC has received 9 adverse incident reports involving sharps bins over the last 5 years.

Main themes of these adverse incident reports include:

- Difficulty fitting lids during assembly or lids not remaining closed during use
- Sharps / needles protruding through sides of the bin with risk of needlestick injuries

What did we learn?

- Lid issues were attributed to a manufacturer packaging issue. Lids were damaged making them difficult to assemble / fit. The manufacturer addressed the packaging issue and advised that the overall number of sharps bin affected was low and so a product recall was not warranted. The manufacturer advised that the Instructions for Use (IFU) indicate lid assembly instructions. Any issues with lid fitting would be identified at this stage.
- Sharps protruding through the sides of bins is attributed to overfilling and / or possible mis-use of bins (e.g. dropping bin during transport).

How can we prevent it?

- Follow IFU for sharps bin (assembly, labelling, use, temporary and final closure, and disposal) and use correct sharps bin for the application.
- Ensure sharps bin is assembled correctly – if device not assembled correctly (e.g. lid does not secure as advised in IFU) then do not use
- Ensure that sharps bins are not overfilled. Close the lid securely when the container is full, typically indicated by a fill line.
- Transport Safely: When transporting sharps containers, ensure they are secured to prevent damage, spillage or exposure to others.

