

# Needle Safe Saskatoon

## *Needle Safe Saskatoon*

### *Vision*

Since the summer of 1999, the vision of Needle Safe Saskatoon has been to develop a comprehensive strategy to deal with improperly discarded needles found in the Saskatoon community.

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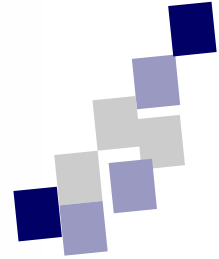
### *Needle Safe Saskatoon Partners*

- AIDS Saskatoon
- City of Saskatoon
- Riversdale Business Improvement District
- Saskatoon Health Region
- Saskatoon Regional Intersectoral Committee

## *Partnership Goals*

- To increase community awareness and knowledge about needle safety.
- To reduce the number of improperly discarded needles found in the community.
- To provide options for the safe disposal of needles.
- To reduce risk, and prevent injury, especially to children who find improperly discarded needles.
- To provide a forum to discuss, plan and implement solutions for keeping Saskatoon communities safe from improperly discarded needles.

**Want to get involved?  
Contact us at 655-4664**



2010 Newsletter

**New!**  
**Needle Safety &  
Disposal Information Line**  
**655-4444**

*Needle Safety - It's Everyone's Concern!*

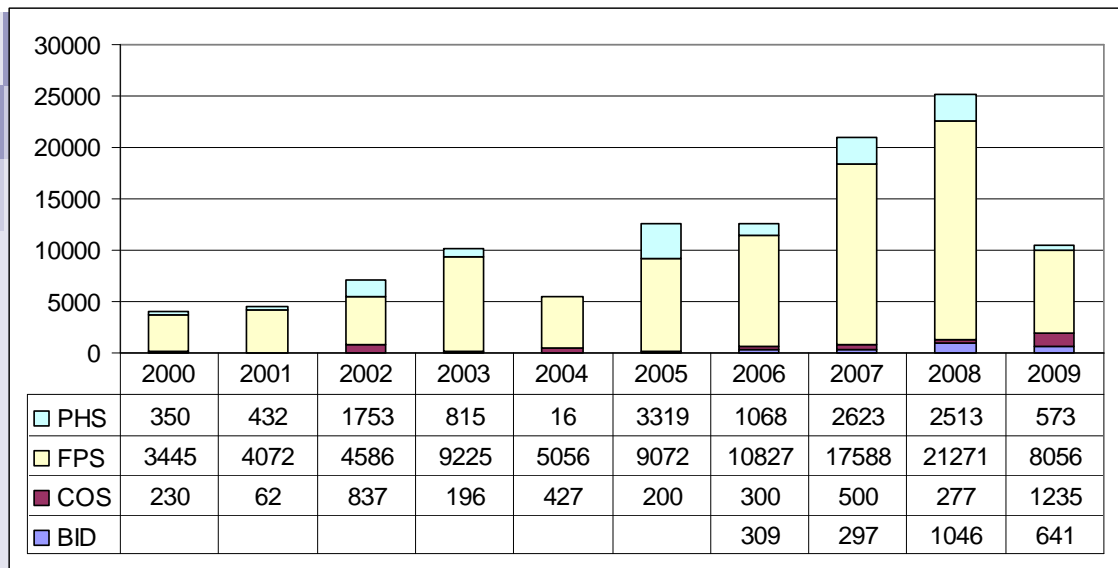


Figure 1: Loose needles in the community by agency, 2000 - 2009

## Loose Needle Recovery

A total of 11,216 loose needles were collected in Saskatoon in 2009 through the combined efforts of agencies involved in needle recovery (10,505) and spring clean up activities (711). This represents approximately less than half the number collected similarly last year.

The four Needle Safe Saskatoon agencies engaged in needle collection in the community collected a total of 10,505 loose needles from the community in 2009, a decrease of 58% over 2008 (does not include needle drop box data). Saskatoon Fire & Protective Services collected 8,056 needles, a 62% decrease. Public Health Services (PHS) collected 573 needles, a decrease of 75%. The Riversdale Business Improvement District (BID) collected 641 loose needles, a decrease of 39%. The City of Saskatoon collected 1,235 needles, more than three times the number collected last year. Many of these needles were not found loose in the community but were confiscated from detention centers.

The majority of needles in the community are found in front streets, yards/parking lots, and alleys. There is a slight increase in the number found in front streets compared to last year. The percentages found in school yards and parks has not changed much in the past few years and is consistently low. There has been a steady decrease in the percentage of needles recovered from apartments and private dwellings.

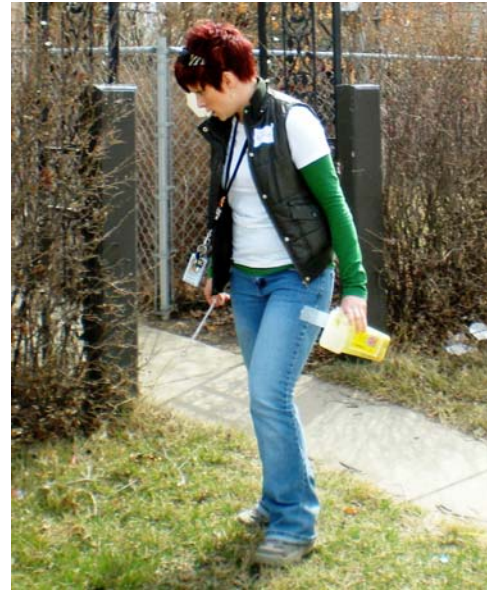
Needles that are found outdoors or in a public location and are not in a container are considered 'high risk' to the general public due to the possibility of a needle stick injury. Of the needles where risk information is complete in 2009, 70.4% were high risk. Needle stick injuries associated with loose needles in the community are rare. There are no documented cases of the transmission of a blood borne illness, from a community needle stick injury, in the Saskatoon Health Region.

Loose needles are also deposited into the needle drop boxes which are in 11 community locations and at 9 Fire Halls. Needle drop box data is no longer counted due to the risk of needle stick injury. Drop box monitoring reports the box fill level and whether the box contains medical waste or other waste. Drop boxes accounted for approximately 97 full boxes this year from over 283 collections by Biomed. The three busiest drop box locations were St. Paul's Hospital, North Health Centre and Idylwyld Centre.

# 2nd Annual Spring Community Needle Clean Up April 22, 2009

## Highlights

- 331 needles recovered
- 56 community partners helped out
- 58 community members received needle safety information



Community partner in action at  
2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Spring Clean Up

This year the number of community partners that helped in the Spring Community Needle Clean Up was over double that of last year!

Needles collected totaled 331.

314 were reported by community partners:

- The majority of needles were loose and found in alleys, street fronts or curb areas (253).
- A smaller number were found in front of retail outlets or in parking lots (16) or in front of houses on public property (45).

17 were reported by Fire & Protective Services:

- 40 city parks and school zones were covered, 7 of which were in the designated clean up area.

58 community members received information about safe needle pick up and disposal.

A pre-arranged media session was held with key spokespersons. The media also joined one of the teams as they performed safe needle retrieval and clean up.

*Thank you to everyone who helped out!*

## Other Clean Ups:

- Cameco recovered 34 needles
- AIDS Saskatoon recovered 346 needles

## Clean Up Team

**2 coordinators and  
56 community partners:**

- AIDS Saskatoon
- SHARP - Saskatoon HIV/ AIDS Reduction (in Harm) Program
- University of Saskatchewan
- SWITCH—Student Wellness Initiative Toward Community Health
- Mental Health & Addictions
- Riversdale Business Improvement District
- Fire & Protective Services
- Community members
- Various Saskatoon Health Region programs

## 16 Clean Up Zones

- Idylwyld Drive to Whitney Avenue from 19<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> Street
- Mayfair area
- 40 city parks and school zones

## Education & Resources

Needle safety education is available to community associations, businesses and organizational groups as well as the general public by calling (306) 655-4664.

Two educational videos are available. "Needle Safety for Youth" includes important needle safety messages to assist in the education of elementary age children.

A second occupational video, "Needle Safety At Work" reviews five work scenarios and needle safety information specific to that occupation. Both videos are available in either DVD or VHS format on a cost recovery basis by calling (306) 655-4664.



### Do you know about our Needle Clean Up Kits?

These kits will help you to safely dispose of needles found on your property!



#### The Needle Clean Up Kit Includes . . .

- ▶ "Needle Safety at Work" video (available in either DVD or VHS format)
- ▶ 1 pair of metal tongs
- ▶ 2 biohazard storage containers
- ▶ 20 pairs of disposable vinyl gloves
- ▶ 1 complete set of instructions

Obtain information on how to make your own kit or how to receive needle clean up supplies for free by calling (306) 655-4664.

Public Health Services  
#101 – 310 Idylwyld Drive North  
Saskatoon SK S7L 0Z2  
Phone: (306) 655-4664  
Fax: (306) 655-3433



March 2010

# Needle Disposal Options

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## Public Disposal Options

- Do not place used needles directly into city garbage.
- Return your hard-sided container to a pharmacy that accepts used sharps.
- Place used sharps in one of the needle drop boxes.
- Call 655-4444 for a list of drop box locations.

## Street Health Clients

- Return used needles to a needle exchange site. When unable to visit a needle exchange site, use a needle drop box.

## Medical or Business Offices

- Call Biomed at (306) 253-4476 to set up containers and pick up.
- Do not use the needle drop boxes.
- Do not place in the city garbage.

The needle drop boxes are located at 20 sites in Saskatoon as a support to safely dispose of used sharps.

If you feel a needle drop box would benefit your community, contact 655-4664.

Use of the boxes is monitored and those showing low use may be moved to an area of greater need. Currently the boxes with the highest use are at St. Paul's Hospital, Idylwyld Centre and North Health Centre.



## Needle Drop Box Locations

(see map on reverse)

### Community Sites

- **7-11** - Avenue P & 22<sup>nd</sup> Street
- **Indian & Metis Friendship Centre** - 168 Wall Street
- **Walpole Avenue** & 7<sup>th</sup> Street
- **Mayfair Drugs** - Avenue F & 33<sup>rd</sup> Street

### Fire Stations

- **#1 Station** - 125 Idylwyld Drive South
- **#2 Station** - 3111 Diefenbaker Drive
- **#3 Station** - 1906 York Avenue
- **#4 Station** - 2106 Faithful Avenue
- **#5 Station** - 421 Central Avenue
- **#6 Station** - 3309 Taylor Street East
- **#7 Station** - 3550 Wanuskewin Road
- **#9 Station** - 870 Attridge Drive
- **Staff Development Centre** - 116 Avenue W South

### Health Region Sites

- **Idylwyld Health Centre** - 310 Idylwyld Drive North
- **Larson House** - Avenue O & 21<sup>st</sup> Street
- **North Health Centre** - 227 Primrose Drive
- **St. Paul's Hospital** - Avenue R & 20<sup>th</sup> Street

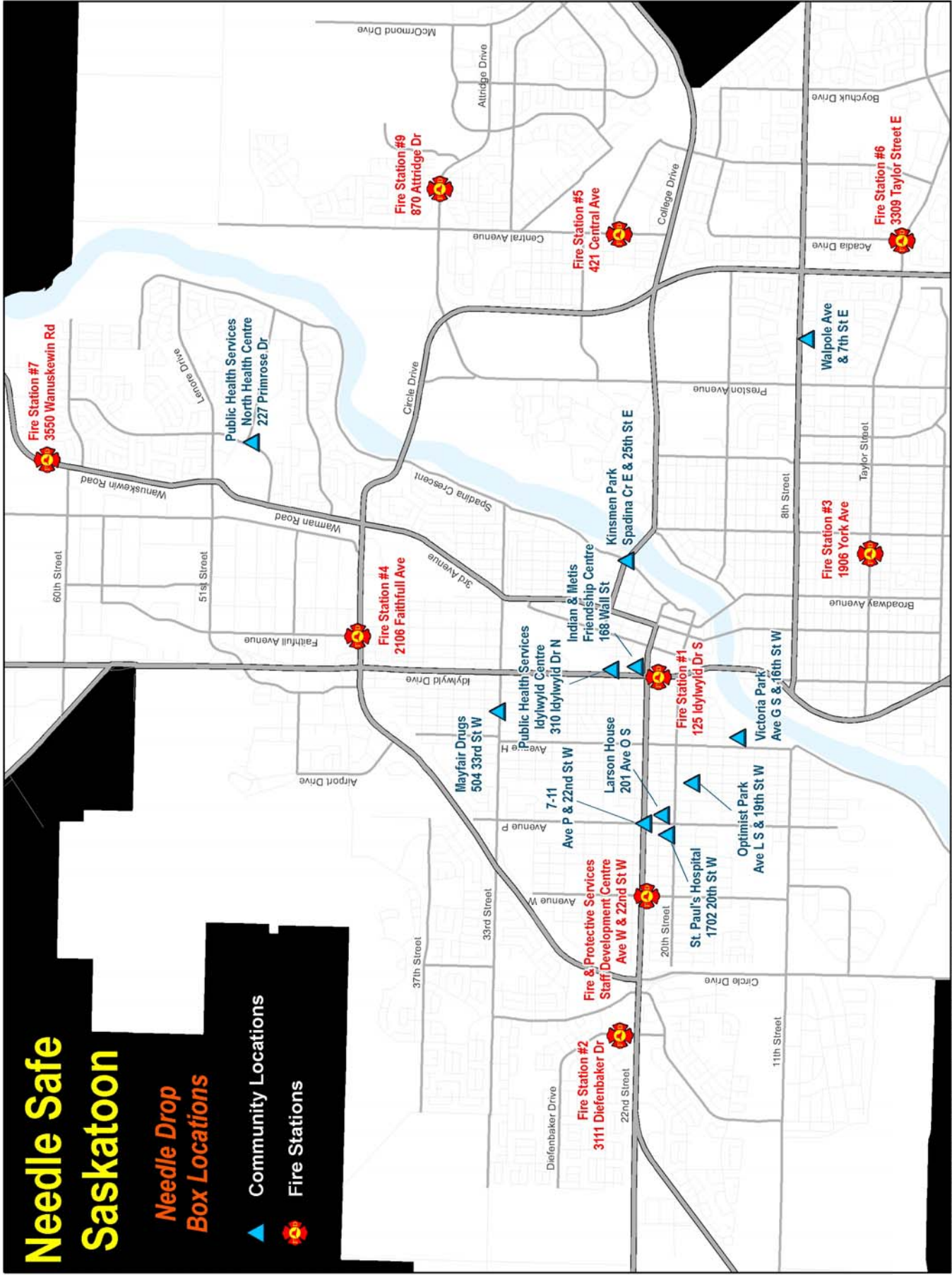
### Saskatoon Park Locations

- **Kinsmen Park** - Spadina Crescent & 25<sup>th</sup> Street
- **Optimist Park** - Avenue L & 19<sup>th</sup> Street
- **Victoria Park Parking Lot** - Avenue G & 16<sup>th</sup> Street

# Needle Safe Saskatoon

Needle Drop  
Box Locations

- Community Locations
- Fire Stations





# Needle Safety

## *It's Everyone's Concern*



**If you find a used needle, follow the steps below for safe pick up and disposal.**

- Do **not** recap the needle.



- Wear garden, work or medical gloves.
- Use tweezers, pliers or tongs to pick up by the end that is not the sharp end. Keep away from your body.
- Place the needle, sharp end first, into a hard container that needles cannot poke through (e.g. liquid laundry detergent or bleach container).



- Call **655-4664** if you do not have these clean-up items.

- Fill a container no more than 3/4 full. If the container is too full, the needles may poke through the side.

- Put the container lid on tightly and tape it.

- Wash your hands with soap and water.

- Store the container in a safe place away from children until you can dispose of it safely. Do not place needles in city garbage.

- Place in a needle drop box in your community. Call 655-4444 for needle drop box locations.

If you have found a needle on public property and do not feel you can safely follow the steps listed, call:

Saskatoon Fire &  
Protective Services at  
**975-3030**

(turn over . . .)



## What should you tell children about finding needles?

Educate your children.

Tell them to:

- Never touch or pick up needles.
- Always call an adult.



## Are used needles dangerous?

Needle poke injuries are:

- a public health concern
- low risk for spreading hepatitis or HIV infection.

There have been no reported hepatitis or HIV infections from a community needle poke injury in Saskatoon Health Region.

## What should you do if you poke yourself with a needle?

- Encourage the wound to bleed by gently squeezing it.

- Wash all exposed areas with soap and water.



- Report the needle poke:
  - Saskatoon Health Region employees call **655-0820** if the injury occurred at work.
  - For all other needle poke injuries call Public Health Services at **655-4620**.
- Go immediately to an Emergency Room for care. Tell them you have been poked by a needle.

**For more information  
on Needle Safety & Disposal  
call 655-4444**

***Needle Safety ~ It's Everyone's Concern***

