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## MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Protect Your Community from Blood Borne Pathogens! Bring Your Sharps to the Health Department**

The Pierce County Health Department wants to remind the public of the health risks of improper disposal of sharps, which include needles, syringes and lancets.

When sharps are not disposed of properly, they pose a serious health risk from accidental needle sticks. When someone suffers an accidental needle stick, they are at risk for infectious diseases. Follow these easy steps to dispose of your sharps properly:

1. **Pick up an approved sharps disposal container from the health department.** We are located in Ellsworth at 412 W Kinne Street or in River Falls at 1234 S. Wasson Lane. No appointment is needed; just come on by anytime from 8AM to 4:30PM. If you are home-bound, please give us a call, as we may be able to arrange drop-offs. You can also pick up containers at River Falls Hospital. Some local pharmacies may have containers, but call ahead to be sure.
2. **Place your sharps in the disposal container as you use them.** We can send you home with a few containers to use as needed.
3. **When your containers are full, bring them back to the health department.** We will ensure these containers are properly disposed of. This service and the containers are offered free of charge. You may also drop off containers at River Falls Hospital. Some local pharmacies make accept drop-offs, but call ahead to be sure.

The health department does ask that businesses and farmers look into alternative options for sharps disposal due to the large amount of sharps used.

Our mission is to assure the health of the public, prevent disease and injury, promote health behaviors, and protect against environmental hazards.