

Syringe Management Plan



2001-2003

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Syringe Management Plan

1. Vision The City of Melbourne will work in partnership with other Government departments, business and the community to ensure that Melbourne is a safe and clean city.

2. Introduction

Injecting drug use and accompanying syringe disposal is an issue of priority within the City of Melbourne. Traders and residents are concerned about illegal drug activity and the associated syringes that are discarded in the municipality, most notably in the central business district. In response, Council has taken a holistic approach to the management of syringe issues, proposing to implement a variety of measures with an aim to achieve health and safety for all people who use the city, including residents, business, visitors and people who use drugs.

The City of Melbourne's work in the area of drugs is built on the concept of harm reduction, a concept which frames both the State and Federal Governments' approaches to drug issues. Harm reduction strategies do not seek to replace abstinence oriented services or law enforcement, rather they are an indispensable complement, which help to reduce drug-related harm, including that which relates to individual and public health.

The formulation of a *Syringe Management Plan* provides an opportunity to facilitate innovative and responsive approaches to reducing syringe related harms in the City of Melbourne. The *Syringe Management Plan* further defines the City of Melbourne's role in reducing drug-related harm and identifies initiatives to be pursued over the next three years.

The *Syringe Management Plan* has a strong emphasis on public health and safety for residents, businesses, visitors and workers. It references existing City of Melbourne policies and plans including the *Drugs Action Plan*, *A Strategy for a Safe City*, and *City Health 2000*, and provides a vehicle for the implementation of key initiatives within the State Government *Safe Needle Disposal Strategy*.

The *Syringe Management Plan* focuses on three key priorities:

- maximising appropriate syringe disposal.
- ensuring rapid removal of syringes from community space.
- monitoring and responding to changing trends in injecting drug use.

A critical dimension of the *Syringe Management Plan* is for Council to form partnerships with affected community groups and stakeholders to develop locally relevant and sustainable solutions to local syringe related problems.

The implementation of the *Syringe Management Plan* will ensure a comprehensive and sustainable solution to syringe related harms in the municipality.

3. Public health, waste management and community safety

Public health has been defined as '...the collective measures which a community takes to prevent disease.' This means that the agents practising this form of prevention usually are the Federal Government, State Governments and local authorities.¹

The Victorian Needle and Syringe Program was established over a decade ago as a public health initiative to minimise the spread of HIV/AIDS and other blood borne diseases among the growing number of injecting drug users in the community, and from injecting drug users to the broader community.

Within this program a number of State and Federal Government funded services distribute clean injecting equipment, and information about safe disposal of used needles and syringes, to injecting drug users. Over the last decade as injecting drug use has steadily increased and become increasingly "street based", the disposal of used injecting equipment has become a significant issue for many Local Government authorities, including Melbourne.

¹ Douglas Gordon, *Health, Sickness and Society* 1976, p.797

Although only a small proportion of the total number of needles and syringes distributed through the Victorian Needle and Syringe Program in the City of Melbourne are discarded inappropriately by drug users, their presence and visibility causes considerable community concern. While Council fully supports the distribution of clean needles and syringes to injecting drug users as a public health measure, the presence of inappropriately discarded syringes within the municipality poses some risk to public health and provides a perception of the city being an unsafe place. People become aware of injecting drug use by its visible presence, either through direct experience such as seeing syringes on the ground, or by indirect reports from media and local networks.²

Discarded needles and syringes generate a level of fear in the community that is disproportionate to the actual risk posed by their presence. The risk of needle stick injury outside a medical setting is low, and there is no recorded case of blood borne virus transfer through such an injury in Australia.

Harms associated with discarded needles and syringes include:

- the possibility that injecting drug users will re-use potentially contaminated injecting equipment with a significant risk of consequent blood borne virus transfer
- the possibility of accidental needle stick injury and a low level of risk of blood borne virus transfer
- the negative impact on public perceptions of the safety and cleanliness of the municipality
- litter generated by a marginal social practice that is not accommodated by mainstream waste management services
- reduction in public support for the Needle and Syringe Program.

² The Injecting Drug Use Needs and Impact Study: Report 2A, p.41, published by the City of Melbourne.

Discarded needles and syringes represent:

- irresponsible disposal practices by some injecting drug users
- a lack of appropriate syringe disposal opportunities
- areas where illegal drug taking is taking place and community safety may be compromised,
- a potentially infectious waste stream generated outside a medical setting
- a potential cause of injury and infection for workers and visitors.

The public health imperative is to reduce the likelihood of needle sharing and needle stick injury and therefore the risk of infection. Exposure to legal liability and risk management has driven wider ownership of the issue with employers, property owners, and managers of public space. Mainstream policies and services have to accommodate this contemporary phenomenon of a biomedical waste stream generated by the public in non-medical settings, and the governance of a marginal social practice that impacts upon public health and community safety.

While public health concerns should continue to drive policy and actions relating to needle and syringe disposal, the way forward is to broaden ownership of the issue and share responsibility for dealing with it as a mainstream issue. This approach would see the inclusion of issues relating to needle and syringe retrieval and disposal, in more general policies and practices to do with infectious diseases, community safety, waste management, law enforcement and occupational health and safety. It also means accepting injecting drug use as something that takes place daily, impacts on everyday life and needs to be accommodated rather than denied or ignored.

Through commitment to the implementation of the *Syringe Management Plan*, the City of Melbourne, in partnership with government, business and the community, will address syringe related harms as articulated in *CityHealth 2000, A Strategy for A Safe City* and the *Drugs Action Plan*, and the *Victorian Safe Needle Disposal Strategy*. This action will contribute to Melbourne's reputation locally, nationally and internationally as a city that is both safe and perceived to be safe.

4. Legal context

The legislative and policy context for illicit drug use is a dynamic and evolving one and impacts upon the context for the *Syringe Management Plan*.

Section 75 of the *Drugs Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981* makes it an offence to use a drug of dependence. Studies of drug users in Victoria and New South Wales indicate that many drug users dispose of their needles and syringes as quickly as possible after injecting. They are afraid that if intercepted by police while carrying a needle or syringe, they could be searched, questioned and possibly charged with use of a drug of dependence.³

As possession of a syringe may be used as evidence to support a drug charge, there is little incentive to carry a syringe until it can be placed in a syringe disposal facility. This has a significant impact on the incidence of unsafe disposal of syringes in the municipality, increasing the need for a more coordinated and flexible approach to syringe disposal in areas that are sites of illegal drug use.

The *Environment Protection (Prescribed Waste) Regulations 1998*, the *Environment Protection (Transport) Regulations 1987*, and the *Manual for the Management and Disposal of Biomedical Wastes in Victoria* address needle and syringe waste produced by health services. However, where the waste is produced by members of the public, these controls are limited to providing the legislative and regulatory framework for the storage, and transport for destruction, of needles and syringes collected by Council services.

³ Drug Policy Expert Committee Stage 2 Report. *Drugs: Meeting the Challenge*, 2000, p. 156-157.

Biomedical waste generated by the public in public places is a relatively new phenomenon in Victoria, developing as an issue as illicit street based injecting drug use has increased. Current regulations reflect a “cradle to the grave” philosophy in the treatment of biomedical waste, that is, the setting where the waste is generated, most usually a medical setting, is responsible for safe disposal. Current regulations do not apply to needles and syringes and other injecting paraphernalia associated with illicit drug use outside medical settings.

The City of Melbourne’s *Environment Management Plan* under the *Environment Local Law 1999*, requires that the owner and occupier of a premise must accept and demonstrate responsibility for the cleanliness of the area immediately adjacent to the premises. Council will lead by example as an owner and occupier of land and buildings to safely manage their responsibilities with respect to the presence of syringes, and will assist other property owners and occupiers in the municipality to similarly manage their responsibilities.

The City of Melbourne is home to many organisations whose employees may come into contact with discarded syringes, and is a significant employer and contractor of workers whose work may involve exposure to needles and syringes. The *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1985* states that “an employer shall provide and maintain so far as is practicable for employees a working environment that is safe and without risks to health”. The Act obliges employers to secure the health, safety and welfare of persons at work; to protect persons at work against risks to health or safety and to assist in securing safe and healthy work environments.

The City of Melbourne as an employer will lead by example in fulfilling its obligations under the Act with respect to the safe handling and disposal of syringes, and will assist other employers in the municipality to similarly fulfil their obligations.

The City of Melbourne also has key responsibilities to manage public space, improve community amenity, and provide a safe and clean environment for use by all workers, residents, and visitors.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 Federal & State Government

The Federal and State Government are responsible for policy development, implementation and evaluation for the delivery of police, health and education services to reduce drug related harm. Policy development and implementation may range from developing legislation to the provision of drug treatment services.⁴

The Victorian Government's Drug Initiative aims to significantly enhance drug services and the capacity to address drug issues over the next three years. The initiative is a broad strategy that addresses the themes of prevention, treatment, enforcement, and saving lives, and the Government will take action in all these areas to reduce the impact of drugs in our community.

Responding to drug issues in Victoria will require partnerships between the levels of government, business, community organisations and individuals. The Victorian Government will provide the leadership and direction required to help facilitate these partnerships.

In January 2001, the Department of Human Services launched the *Victorian Safe Needle Disposal Strategy*. The Strategy was developed in response to significant community concern about the presence of discarded syringes in public spaces. The Strategy includes the establishment of a toll free Helpline 1800 55 23 55 to assist community members to safely handle and dispose of syringes they may find, and other initiatives to encourage appropriate disposal of used syringes by injecting drug users. A statewide group of stakeholders known as the *Disposal Monitoring Group*, has been established to further develop understanding, roles and responsibilities. Local Government is represented in this process by the peak body, the Victorian Local Government Association, and the City of Melbourne participates in working groups concerned with community education, research and surveillance aspects of the strategy.

5.2 Local Government

Apart from having responsibilities under the Health Act and with respect to public space management, Local Government is well equipped to respond to particular local needs of importance to the municipality.

Local Governments are suitably placed to develop and facilitate partnerships between a wide range of agencies and act as a liaison between the State Government and municipalities with similar issues.

The City of Melbourne has a key role to play in minimising waste within the municipality in the interests of public health and safety. Council places importance on working together with business and the community to facilitate a reduction in drug related harm and to improve the cleanliness of the municipality. A community development approach is a key Council focus, working to integrate community, business and government through a variety of strategies.

Within the context of City of Melbourne's approach to the *Syringe Management Plan 2001-2003*, several main roles in the management of syringes have been identified. These are:

5.2.1 Leadership & Coordination

The role of the City of Melbourne is to develop syringe and drug policies for the municipality, manage programs, services and small-scale projects to minimise inappropriately disposed of syringes, and develop partnerships with service providers, business and the community to reduce drug related harm.

The City of Melbourne is an acknowledged leader in syringe management planning at a Local Government level and in August 2001 received an award from the Victorian Division of the Australian Institute of Environmental Health, for excellence in leadership.

⁴ Drugs Action Plan 2001-2003, City of Melbourne, p.5

5.2.2 Support

The City of Melbourne has a key role to play in supporting the needs of constituents, community groups, businesses and service providers through information provision, local area clean ups, staff training, and responding to trader and resident requirements in relation to drug issues.

5.2.3 Education, Training & Promotion

The City of Melbourne has a role in ensuring access to training and information that assists residents and businesses in the successful resolution of drug related problems. Council is itself a direct provider of training in the management of drug related issues, including syringe handling and disposal.

5.3 Business

Many retailers have expressed concern to Council about the drug use which occurs in close proximity to the shopping precinct, as well as the associated syringes and litter which are often discarded in the area. Retailers are principally concerned about the safety and security of their staff, customers and visitors to the city. Long-term concerns include the attraction of staff and customers and the ongoing viability of city businesses.⁵

The City of Melbourne shares with businesses an interest and responsibility in ensuring that residents, visitors and workers can enjoy the amenity of the City.

The City of Melbourne will assist traders in undertaking their responsibilities with respect to improving community amenity and build their capacity to respond to drug and syringe related issues.

The City of Melbourne will partner business in addressing the issues they have raised in the development of the *Drugs Action Plan* and a *Strategy for Safe City*, through a range of actions including training, consultation, area audits and the installation of syringe disposal facilities.

The City of Melbourne will assist traders to meet their obligations under the provisions of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* to provide and maintain a safe working environment for their employees, and their responsibilities to provide a safe environment for customers.

5.4 Community

Individuals and groups in the community also experience issues around inappropriate disposal of syringes.

The City of Melbourne provides a number of services and responses including:

- installing and servicing syringe disposal units (SharpSafes) in public toilets, parks, gardens, streets and lanes to facilitate appropriate disposal of needles and syringes by injecting drug users
- providing regular clean ups of drug “hotspot” areas around the CBD
- providing rapid response clean ups upon request
- delivering education, training and practical support to residents and businesses to successfully manage local problems with needles and syringes.

Community members have a responsibility to report syringes that are identified in public areas in order to ensure their prompt removal from areas where they may cause harm. There will always be a time lag between the instant that a syringe/needle is spotted and reported for collection by Council contractors, and the time when it is actually collected. Most reported syringes are collected within a few hours of being reported, however some people who spot offending syringes are willing and able to remove them there and then so they pose no further risk of harm. Council will enhance its current rapid response services to support residents and businesses to safely handle and dispose of needles and syringes.

⁵ A Strategy for a Safe City, City Safety Issues Report, City of Melbourne p.15

People who use drugs also have a responsibility to dispose of their syringes in a syringe disposal facility to minimise public health and safety risks for others. Council will form partnerships with injecting drug users and the Needle and Syringe Program to maximise appropriate syringe disposal in the municipality.

Through the *Syringe Management Plan*, the City of Melbourne is committed to empowering the community so they are equipped to address syringe issues as they arise. This will occur through community education campaigns, the enhancement of current syringe collection services, and the provision of mechanisms for syringe disposal.

The City of Melbourne will engage the local community including traders, residents and injecting drug users, to ensure a comprehensive response to syringe litter issues and a cleaner and safer environment.

6. Principles that underpin the Plan

The City of Melbourne's approach to the management of syringes is based on the following general principles that underpin the *Syringe Management Plan 2001-2003*:

6.1 Public Health & Safety

The City of Melbourne will strategically manage and improve the standard of public health and safety in the municipality.

6.2 Harm Reduction

The City of Melbourne will lead coordinated and effective action to reduce the health, economic and social harm associated with illegal drug use in the municipality.

6.3 Health for All

The City of Melbourne views injecting drug use as a health and social issue, as well as a legal issue, and will take a holistic approach to the management of syringe issues with an aim to achieve improved outcomes for all.

6.4 Local Government Role

The City of Melbourne, the State and Federal Governments, residents, businesses, and injecting drug users all have responsibilities to ensure drug related harms are addressed successfully. As a Local Government authority, the City of Melbourne has the legitimacy and relationships to lead and facilitate action to address the drug issue as it impacts on all parts of the community at the local level.

6.5 Partnerships

Partnerships with other levels of government, local traders, residents, contractors, and community service providers in the municipality will form the cornerstone of Council's efforts to respond to syringe related issues.

7. Areas of focus

Council has identified three key areas of focus which define its approach to the management of syringes in the municipality. These areas provide a framework for the strategies identified through the *Syringe Management Plan 2001-2003*.

The City of Melbourne will:

7.1 Maximise Appropriate Syringe Disposal

Inappropriately discarded syringes pose some public health risks, including the opportunity for the spread of infectious disease, and environmental hazards in parks, gardens, waterways and beaches, and generate considerable community concern about safety. By improving the incidence of appropriate disposal of syringes, these risks will be minimised.

The City of Melbourne in partnership with the State Government, businesses, residents and injecting drug users will participate in community education campaigns, conduct syringe disposal training, explore alternative syringe disposal mechanisms, and promote access to services in order to maximise the appropriate disposal of syringes.

7.2 Ensure Rapid Syringe Collection

The City of Melbourne plays a lead role in coordinating syringe collection services within the municipality and contracts the provision of syringe collection services.

During the next three years, Council will improve rapid response to syringe removal, extend syringe collection services, and optimise the use of disposal services.

Current mechanisms for syringe disposal in the City of Melbourne include syringe disposal units in public places and toilet facilities, public and private property clean up services and street cleaning services. Many businesses, institutions and community groups have also implemented systems to ensure appropriate syringe management and disposal.

7.3 Monitor for Continuous Improvement

Monitoring of syringe disposal contributes to knowledge about patterns in drug use in the municipality, assists in identifying areas that may require a specific response, and provides Council with valuable feedback about the effectiveness of current approaches.

8. Summary of key initiatives

Maximise Appropriate Syringe Disposal	Ensure Rapid Syringe Collection	Monitor for Continuous Improvement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Actively promote the safe disposal of syringes. 2 Raise the profile of existing and proposed syringe disposal mechanisms. 3 Increase the number of syringe disposal facilities located throughout the municipality, strategically locating and monitoring high use areas. 4 Support businesses in the municipality to improve appropriate disposal. 5 Advocate for increased syringe disposal options in the community, such as pharmacies, and hospitals. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6 Enhance the current system of public and private property syringe pick up services, ensuring the municipality is regularly cleaned of syringes. 7 Investigate mechanisms for providing comprehensive syringe disposal. 8 Work in partnership with traders, businesses, the State Government and other key stakeholders in the management of syringes. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9 Develop a systematic approach to the monitoring and collection of information, to ensure the safe disposal of syringes and identify future high priority areas. 10 Develop partnerships with other levels of Government and other municipalities to improve and develop syringe disposal services. 11 Contribute to awareness, knowledge and understanding about drug related issues.

9. Key initiatives

The actions developed to address each key strategy are outlined below.

9.1 Maximise Appropriate Syringe Disposal

Strategy	Actions	Year
1 Actively promote the safe disposal of syringes.	1.1 Develop communication strategies and initiatives to promote the participation residents, traders, private property owners, and injecting drug users in the safe disposal of syringes.	Core
	1.2 Develop information/community education resources regarding safe syringe disposal for promotion throughout the municipality and through precinct groups.	Core
	1.3 Distribute syringe disposal containers to community members upon request.	Core
	1.4 Provide education and support to interested community groups and concerned community members to ensure rapid and safe removal of syringes from public and private space.	Core
	1.5 In collaboration with the Drugs Action Team, develop initiatives to assist city traders in responding to drug use and inappropriate syringe disposal.	Core
	1.6 Work in partnership with the Department of Human Services and local community health services to ensure that syringe disposal issues are effectively managed, and a harm minimisation approach is maintained.	Core
2 Raise the profile of existing and proposed syringe disposal mechanisms.	2.1 Identify and develop opportunities to promote Council's syringe disposal services to residents, businesses, and injecting drug users.	Core
	2.2 Promote syringe disposal services through Council networks and services.	Core
	2.3 Promote locations of syringe disposal facilities to injecting drug users and residents and businesses through targeted marketing.	Core
3 Increase the number of syringe disposal facilities located throughout the municipality, strategically locating and monitoring high use areas.	3.1 Increase the number of syringe disposal units in hotspot and potential high use areas as required.	Core
	3.2 Install a syringe disposal unit in every public toilet cubicle within the municipality.	1 2 3
4 Support businesses in the municipality to improve appropriate disposal.	4.1 Investigate the feasibility of an incentive scheme to encourage the increased installation of syringe disposal units in toilets in businesses.	2
5 Advocate for increased syringe disposal options in the community, such as pharmacies, and hospitals.	5.1 Increase the participation of pharmacies in the municipality in promoting and providing safe syringe disposal services.	2
	5.2 Collaborate with hospitals and medical services in the municipality to increase opportunities for community members to safely dispose of syringes.	2

9.2 Ensure Rapid Syringe Collection

Strategy	Actions	Year
6 Enhance the current system of public and private property syringe pick up services, ensuring the municipality is regularly cleaned of syringes.	6.1 As the need arises, extend the CBD Clean Up Service to broader areas of the municipality, in negotiation with other stakeholders.	1 2 3
	6.2 Strategically develop the CBD Clean Up Service to ensure it is pro-active and prevents syringes becoming a visible harm to residents and visitors to the city.	1 2 3
	6.3 Liaise with key stakeholders, property owners and contractors to clarify responsibilities in regard to syringe clean ups from private property.	2 3
	6.4 Strategically develop the Private Property Response Service to support private property owners in ensuring the safe and rapid disposal of syringes.	2
	6.5 Investigate the assistance Council can provide businesses to enhance rapid syringe collection.	Core
	6.6 Develop the awareness and capacity of City of Melbourne staff and contractors to handle syringes safely and dispose of them appropriately.	Core
	6.7 Investigate locality based syringe related problems as they emerge, then facilitate and support stakeholders to develop appropriate, sustainable solutions.	Core
7 Investigate mechanisms for providing comprehensive syringe disposal.	7.1 Continuously develop and improve syringe collection units and mechanisms, and syringe management services in the municipality in response to developments in knowledge and technology.	1 2 3
	7.2 Introduce a safe syringe disposal service for residents with diabetes or other medical conditions.	2
8 Work in partnership with traders, businesses, the State Government and other key stakeholders in the management of syringes.	8.1 Facilitate and participate in syringe/drug issues networks at the local, state and federal levels as appropriate to ensure effective local level responses to syringe related issues.	1 2 3
	8.2 In collaboration with the Drugs Action Team, participate in initiatives to address syringe related issues as part of community education and Drugs Action strategies.	1 2 3
	8.3 Further develop and market the Safe Syringe Disposal in the Workplace training program as a workforce development initiative to increase competency in managing syringe related issues in the workplace.	2
	8.4 Identify opportunities for collaboration and resources to assist in further developing the response to syringes in the City of Melbourne.	1 2 3

9.3 Monitor for Continuous Improvement

Strategy	Actions	Year
9 Develop a systematic approach to the monitoring and collection of information, to ensure the safe disposal of syringes and identify future high priority areas.	9.1 Refine data collection and monitoring processes to enhance understanding of patterns and changes in drug issues in the municipality.	2
	9.2 Regularly analyse and report on syringe distribution and collection data.	1 2 3
	9.3 Implement a more effective information management system for mapping and monitoring data.	1 2 3
	9.4 Explore the possibilities for comprehensive mapping and monitoring of the presence of syringes in streets and laneways in the CBD.	2
	9.5 Conduct an audit of all streets and laneways in the CBD quarterly.	Core
	9.6 Analyse laneway reports to assess location requirements for syringe disposal units.	Core
10 Develop partnerships with other levels of Government and other municipalities to improve and develop syringe disposal services.	10.1 Participate as appropriate in the implementation of the Victorian Safe Needle Disposal Strategy.	1 2
11 Contribute to awareness, knowledge and understanding about drug related issues.	11.1 Make relevant data available to key decision-makers as part of the development of an evidence base for solutions to drug related issues.	Core
	11.2 Develop the awareness and capacity of people who work in the municipality to effectively respond to syringe related issues.	Core

10. Management, coordination and review

The City of Melbourne is committed to the ongoing management, review and evaluation of the *Syringe Management Plan* during the 2001-2003 period.

A Project Officer dedicated to the *Syringe Management Plan* will be responsible for prioritising action areas and developing implementation plans in conjunction with Council work areas with strategy allocation. Strategies will be implemented in accordance with Best Value Agreements, Operational Business Plans and budget priorities.

At the completion of each year Council will review and refine action areas in liaison with Branch and Group representatives. Annual reviews will aim to address:

1. Current and emerging public health issues
2. Relevancy of action areas and strategies
3. Completion of strategies and incorporation into Business Plans

Representatives will provide a summary of the actions for each strategy adopted in that year and an implementation plan will be developed for the following year.

Council plans to convene a working group that will meet on a regular basis to discuss drug use and syringe disposal issues in the municipality. The role of the group will be to discuss a number of drug and syringe related strategies being implemented by the Council through the *Drugs Action Plan* and the *Syringe Management Plan*, as well as to address current issues raised by City of Melbourne constituents.

11. Reference documents

A significant number of strategic plans have been developed by Council to lead coordinated and effective action across the municipality. Many of these plans have been recognised and referenced within the *Syringe Management Plan* due to their emphasis on city safety and minimising the impact of drug use. Related documents and plans are outlined below. Copies of these documents may be obtained by contacting the City of Melbourne hotline on 9658 9658 or by visiting the web site: www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/drugsaction/

- Drugs Action Plan 2001-2003
- A Strategy for a Safe City 2000-2002
- CityHealth 2002, City of Melbourne's Municipal Public Health Plan
- City Plan, City of Melbourne's Municipal Strategic Statement
- Corporate Plan 2000-2003
- A City for Young People 1996-1999, City of Melbourne's Plan for Youth

12. Useful Contacts

The City of Melbourne offers a variety of syringe disposal and retrieval services from public and private property.

- **City of Melbourne Customer Hotline**
Tel: 9658 9658 Monday to Friday 7.30am-6.00pm
or
- **Victorian Syringe Disposal Helpline**
Tel: 1800 552 355 24 hours, 7 days a week.
Available throughout Victoria

The State Government provides clean needles and syringes, swabs, health and safety information, and safe disposal options through Needle and Syringe Programs. In the general City of Melbourne area, these include:

- **The Community Syringe Disposal Project**
Tel: 9654 2198 Monday to Friday 9am-5pm
Syringe disposal, monitoring, education and training
- **Melbourne Inner City AIDS Prevention Centre**
348 Smith Street, Collingwood 3066
Tel: 0418 179 814
Mobile Service: 7 days a week 7.30pm-11.15pm
Monday-Friday 10.30am-6.30pm
- **Inner West Outreach Service**
Mobile Needle and Syringe Program
Tel: 0418 170 556, 1800 170 556 (public phone)
Monday-Friday 10.00am-5.00pm

Further information

Health Services City of Melbourne
Tel: 03 9658 8817

Drugs Action Team City of Melbourne
Tel: 03 9658 9922
www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/drugsaction



© City of Melbourne
July 2002
GPO Box 1603M
Melbourne Victoria 3001

Hotline **(03) 9658 9658**
Email enquiries@melbourne.vic.gov.au
Internet www.melbourne.vic.gov.au