



DEFECT & INVESTIGATION CENTRE

FOR ACTION BY:

Chief Executive of each HSS Trust
General Manager/Chief Executive of each HSS Board
General Manager/Chief Executive of each Agency
General Practitioners

Stoney Road Dundonald
Belfast
Northern Ireland BT16 1US

ADVICE NOTICE (NI) 2000/02

Date: 21 February 2000

Telephone 01232 523745
Facsimile 01232 523900
GTN Code 440

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| Product | : | Sharpsafe Sharps Boxes 11 litre and 24 litre sizes |
| Manufacturer/ Supplier | : | Frontier Medical Products |
| Issue | : | Reported problems with use of the above Product |
| Action | : | All Staff should be instructed in procedures for use |

1. ATTENTION CHIEF EXECUTIVES/GENERAL MANAGERS

This Advice Notice should be brought to the immediate attention of all who need to know, or be aware of it including those listed below, in accordance with local procedures, and immediate action should be taken as detailed overleaf:

- ◆ Medical, Nursing and Care Staff
- ◆ Infection Control Nurses
- ◆ Community Care Staff, including District Nursing
- ◆ Safety Liaison Officers
- ◆ Health and Safety Managers, Co-ordinators
- ◆ Directors of Nursing
- ◆ Supplies Officers
- ◆ Ambulance Personnel
- ◆ Risk Managers

Boards/Trusts should ensure that if appropriate, this information is passed to ALL persons having the responsibility for premises registered under "THE REGISTERED HOMES (NI) ORDER 1992".



ADVICE NOTICE

2. IMMEDIATE ACTION

- a. Apply an appropriate level of care and attention until familiar with the product.
- b. Ensure that the top section of the box is fitted in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions (Appendix 1 – 11 litre.)
- c. **DO NOT** fill boxes more than around $\frac{3}{4}$ full.
- d. **DO NOT** enter hands or fingers into the box at any time
- e. Follow the manufacturer's closing instructions when closing the box for disposal (Appendix 1 – 11 litre.)

3. BACKGROUND

A number of adverse incident reports have been received concerning the Frontier Medical 11 litre and 24 litre 'Sharpsafe' sharps boxes.

This Advice Notice underlines good practice that should be followed until the NIDIC investigations are concluded.

- When using any new product, apply an appropriate level of care and attention until fully familiar with the product.
- Ensure that the top section of the box is fitted exactly in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- The 'Training Guide for Management of Clinical Waste', issued under cover of PEL(99)18, instructed that sharps boxes should not be filled more than $\frac{3}{4}$ full. Any restriction on door operation may indicate that the box is full. The box should then be closed and locked. In no circumstances should sharps be forced into the box if fingers and hands have to be inserted into the box to accomplish this. **CLOSE THE BOX FOR DISPOSAL AND INSERT THE SHARP INTO A NEW BOX**
- In no circumstances should fingers or hands enter into the box.
- Follow the manufacturer's closing instructions when closing the door. It is important that the back hinges of the door are fully engaged when depressing the front locking tabs to lock the door. If they are not engaged, the door may not seal properly at the hinge side. With the 11 litre box the door hinges are engaged fully by applying a slight force upwards when pulling the door up vertically from its open position. A firm engagement 'click' indicates that the hinges have engaged properly. The 24 litre box door hinges do not engage in the same manner as the 11 litre box. Ensure that the locating ribs on the top of the door remain engaged in the locating slot. Damage to locating slots may result in the door not closing properly.
- The door is sealed by applying pressure to the front locking tabs only. It is not necessary to apply pressure at the door hinge side.

4. ENQUIRIES

Enquiries regarding this notice should be addressed as follows:

NORTHERN IRELAND DEFECT & INVESTIGATION CENTRE (NIDIC)
Health Estates
Estate Policy
Stoney Road
Dundonald
Belfast BT16 1US *marked for the attention of Mr Brian Godfrey*

Tel: 028 90 523714

Fax: 028 90 523900

Email: brian.godfrey@dhssni.gov.uk

Yours faithfully

Brian Godfrey
Defect Centre Manager

HOW TO REPORT DEFECTS

Professional Estate Letter PEL(93)36 issued by Estate Services Directorate, on 27th July 1994 advises Health and Social Services Boards, HSS Trusts and agencies how to notify HPSS about accidents with and defects in medicinal products, buildings and plant, medical devices and other medical and non medical equipment and supplies.