

Regulations for Handling Infectious Waste Sharps at Tattoo and Body Piercing Shops

Tattoo and piercing shops are primarily regulated under Ohio Department of Health (ODH) regulations. You must submit plans for your business and an application form, pay a fee and get your operation approved by your local health department.

Local health departments also inspect shops. To help protect public health, you are also subject to strict requirements related to hand-washing, needle handling, record-keeping, client age limitations and sterilization procedures.

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) regulates tattoo/piercing shops because they generate infectious waste sharps, including disposable needles, syringes, scalpels and razors. If your business generates less than 50 pounds of infectious waste per calendar month, you are classified as a small generator.

Some of the basic Ohio EPA requirements for small generators are summarized below. If you have questions about these requirements, go to epa.ohio.gov/dmwm/Home/Infectious-Waste or contact an infectious waste specialist at (614) 644-2621.

Containers and Disposal

Small generators must put discarded needles, syringes, scalpel blades and other sharps into a sharps container. The container must be in good condition, puncture and leak resistant with a tight-fitting cover. You must label your container with the international biohazard symbol. Once the container is full, you can put it in the dumpster along with your other solid waste for pickup by your solid waste hauler.

Keeping Records

Under Ohio EPA's rules, small infectious waste generators must keep a written log which shows the amount (weight) generated each month. You aren't required to send this information to Ohio EPA, but you do need to keep it on file at your business.

If you generate more than 50 pounds of infectious waste in a month, you must register with Ohio EPA as a large infectious waste generator. Large generators cannot put untreated infectious waste in their dumpster. They must ensure that the waste is properly treated either on-site or shipped off-site to a licensed infectious waste treatment facility. Once rendered non-infectious through treatment, wastes can be disposed at a licensed solid waste disposal facility.

Resources

- [Small Generators of Infectious Waste guidance document](#)
- [Large Generators of Infectious Waste guidance document](#)
- [Ohio Department of Health \(ODH\) Website - Tattoo/Body Piercing Establishment Regulations](#)
- [List of local health departments](#)



Pollution Prevention Tips

- ✓ Switch to LED bulbs to save energy
- ✓ Turn off lights or install motion detector lights or go natural and install sky lights
- ✓ Keep room temperature at a moderate setting
- ✓ Install a programmable, digital thermostat
- ✓ Purchase energy-saving office equipment and recycle old electronic/office equipment
- ✓ Turn off or unplug computers and other electronics when not in use
- ✓ Go paperless (electronic receipts)
- ✓ Remove your business from junk mail lists
- ✓ Recycle paper, cardboard, aluminum cans, plastic and other common recyclables
- ✓ Think of water efficiency (don't allow faucets to run or drip, etc.)
- ✓ Work and do business with other like-minded, sustainable businesses

