A. Purpose

This SOP describes the safe use and disposal of sharps waste to protect those at risk when working with sharps and animals.

B. Scope

All persons using sharps with animals at USC must adhere to the content of this Standard Operating Procedure.

C. Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharps</td>
<td>Items with corners, edges, or projections capable of cutting or piercing the skin. Items such as needles, scalpels, blades, glass pipettes, glass slides, and broken glass are sharps.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharps containers</td>
<td>Devices for the specific purpose of sharps disposal and in most cases are labeled with the biohazard sign.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D. Equipment

- Biologically Contaminated Sharp Waste Container (red)
- Chemical Sharp Waste Container (green)
- Chemotherapeutic Sharp Waste Container (yellow)
- Forceps or Tongs
E. Precautions

1. Wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
   a. Lab coat or disposable isolation gown
   b. Gloves
   c. Safety glasses or other eye protection as needed
   d. Face mask and hair bonnet if in animal facility procedure room
   e. Wear full-length pants (or clothing that otherwise fully covers the legs and ankles) and closed toe/heel shoes

F. Procedures

1. Handling sharps
   a. Receive training before using a sharp for the first time;
   b. Before using any sharp, be sure to have a convenient sized sharps container;
   c. Organize equipment at the point of use;
   d. Do not have personnel stationed between you and the sharps container;
   e. Use extreme caution and be alert when handling sharps, avoid distractions and keep sight of the needle;
   f. Properly restrain or anesthetize animals before in vivo procedures involving needles or other sharps;
   g. Do not use a syringe to mix hazardous fluids forcefully;
   h. Do not bend, recap, clip, or remove needles from syringes;
   i. Never pass or leave an uncapped needle on the workbench with the tip exposed;
   j. Use a reusable scalpel blade only if it is attached to a handler;
   k. Point needles away from yourself;
   l. If working with a blade or razor, always cut away from yourself. Use forceps or a tool to hold the specimen;
   m. Activate the safety feature of engineered sharps and other devices with injury prevention features as soon as procedure is completed;
   n. If it is essential that a contaminated needle be recapped or removed from a syringe (e.g. Hamilton syringe), use of a mechanical device or the one-handed scoop method is necessary;
   o. Do not place syringes in pans containing pipettes or other glassware in order to eliminate the need of sorting syringes out later;
   p. Decontaminate reusable sharps such as scissors and forceps as soon as possible after use;
   q. If a needle stick should occur, wash the area with soap and water for 15 minutes, report the incident to your supervisor, and seek medical attention as soon as possible.
2. Disposing of sharps

a. Sharps disposal containers are provided in all areas where sharps are used; if you need additional containers, contact the animal facility manager or supervisor.

b. Used disposable needles, syringes, blades are placed directly in appropriate sharps disposal containers as soon as possible after use.
   
   ✓ **Red sharps** containers need to be used for disposal of biologically contaminated sharps.
   
   ✓ **Green sharps** waste containers contain sharps contaminated with chemicals.
   
   ✓ **Yellow container** waste containers contain sharps with residual chemotherapeutics and all items that may be contaminated with trace chemotherapeutics including bench pads, gloves or towels

c. Do not dispose of non-sharp waste in the green or red sharps containers;

d. Do not pick up contaminated or broken glass with your bare hands. Use forceps, tongs or other mechanical devices;

e. Never overfill a sharps container. When a sharps container is 2/3 to 3/4 full, its lid must be closed and removed from the procedure room for disposal. Contact the animal facility manager or supervisor to arrange the pickup. Each sharps container has an identifiable fill line.

G. Training & Documentation

If this SOP is reviewed as part of required training for USC Department of Animal Research users and employees, the trainer and employee must both sign below and the manager will retain this copy in the employee’s personnel files.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee Name</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trainer Name</td>
<td>Signature</td>
<td>Date</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Prepared/Revised by: Ekaterina Semenyuk  
Reviewed by: Kathryn O'Brien  
Date: 10/29/2019  
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