

Introduction to
Drug Litter Safety



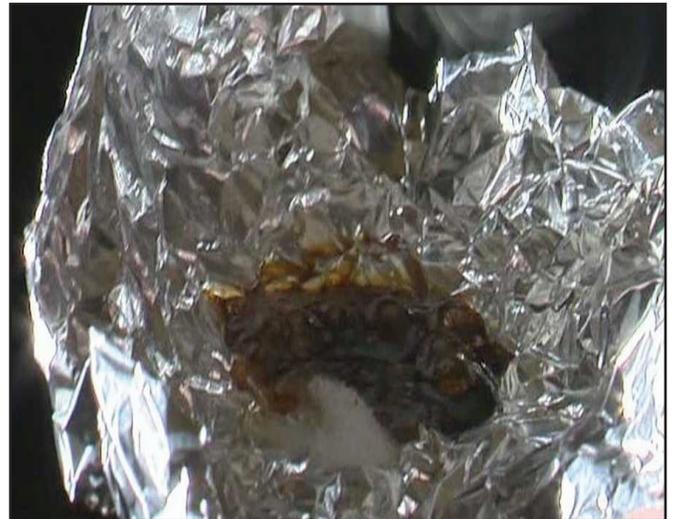
Information provided by New Albany Law Enforcement, Ross County Health District, Columbus Public Health, chillicotheohio.gov and drugfree.org. Written by Colleen McCord and The Ross County Park District. This document was produced for educational purposes only and is not intended for medical advice.

Identifying Drugs & Drug Paraphernalia

Drugs and paraphernalia can be hard to identify. Remember to be aware when collecting litter as everyday items can be used to store and/or administer drugs. If something looks suspicious or out of place, assume it is dangerous, proceed with caution and dispose of the item properly. This document will show some examples of items you may encounter and how to dispose of them properly.



Aluminum foil: a surface used to contain the drug while it is smoked.



Aluminum foil: a surface used to heat and liquify a drug for injection.



Steel wool: used to filter a drug when smoked or loaded into syringe.

Picking up suspicious litter such as needles, razor blades and broken glass is dangerous as they may carry diseases such as staph infections, strep, tetanus, HIV and hepatitis C. Never pick up a needle or suspicious object unless you are confident you can do so safely. If you choose to pick up a sharp object while collecting litter, protect yourself by following proper procedure.



Burnt spoon: a surface used to heat and liquify a drug for injection.



pipes: various pipes from household objects.



capped needle: used to inject drugs.



One pot meth labs: also known as "shake and bake".



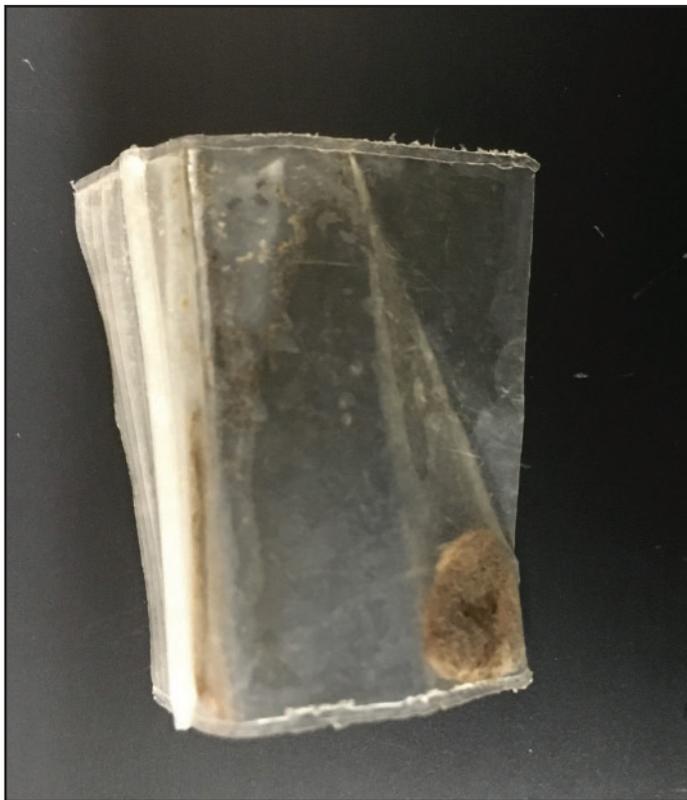
butane torch: used for heating drugs.



Methamphetamine wrapped in lottery ticket.



Heroin in plastic tube.



Black tar heroin.



Cocaine in baggie.

Narcotics can be concealed and discarded in a variety of ways. They can be disguised in everyday objects that appear to be common litter. Always use gloves or a trash picker when clearing trash.

You may also find vaping paraphernalia such as devices that look like flash drives, gel jars that contain dabs, and pods or cartridges that contain THC oil. Some litter may resemble high-tech equipment. If the object looks out of place, dispose of the item with caution.



Nitrous oxide canister: used for inhaling “whip-its”.



JUUL electronic cigarette.



THC cartridge for electronic cigarette.



Marijuana wax or “dabs”.



Baggie of marijuana.

PERSONAL SAFETY

GLOVES: Put on gloves and never pick up sharp objects or a needle with your bare hands. Gloves WILL NOT protect against punctures or cuts, but will protect against blood and fluids. To help prevent getting blood or fluid on you, do not touch your face or skin.

SHOES: Wear closed toe shoes to protect your feet.

TONGS: Use a tool (like tongs) to pick up the needle or sharp object and keep it as far away from your body as possible.

If a needle is uncapped, do not re-cap it.

REMEMBER: Treat all needles and sharp objects as if they are contaminated.



-If you are stuck or cut by a found needle or sharp object, wash the area with soap and water, and call your doctor as soon as possible.

-If you are not confident in properly discarding a sharp or feel unsafe, don't hesitate to contact law enforcement.



SHARPS CONTAINER

You can make a sharps container from a puncture proof plastic container with a lid (like a heavy duty laundry detergent, bleach or 2-Liter pop bottle). Do not use glass jars because they can break. Always label the container "DANGER: NEEDLES INSIDE". FDA-cleared sharps containers are also available at the hospital or local pharmacies.

PREPARE CONTAINER: Open the container carefully and place it on a sturdy, flat surface (like the ground) next to the needle or sharp object. Never hold the container in your hand when you are putting a needle or sharp object in it.

PUTTING A NEEDLE OR SHARP OBJECT IN CONTAINER: Place the needle or sharp object into the container one at a time, with the point or sharp end facing down. Always point the sharp end of a needle or object away from your body. Never put your hand into the container.

CLOSE & TIGHTLY SECURE CONTAINER: Close and secure the lid of the container as tightly as possible. Use duct tape if necessary to keep the lid on the bottle. Do not overfill the container.

WASH HANDS: Carefully take off your gloves and wash your hands with hot, soapy water -- or use hand sanitizer if you do not have access to water. Discard gloves into sharps container.

CLEAN TOOLS: Clean and wash any tools that came in contact with the sharp object.

DISPOSAL OF SHARPS CONTAINER: If involved in a large cleanup, get a new container when the current one is 3/4 full of needles or sharp objects, otherwise dispose of the container immediately. Remember, sharps and syringes must always be placed in a visibly labeled, hard plastic container with a cap. Place in a trashcan with a secure lid for your safety and the safety of others.

