

Community Sharps Program

South Gippsland Shire Council will conclude its Community Sharps Program on 30 June 2026, with the service transitioning to other providers within the health sector.

The Program was established in 2001 as a partnership between Council and local health services. Over time however, responsibility for funding and delivering the program had shifted solely to Council.

As part of its review into the service, Council undertook benchmarking across the sector: this confirmed that community sharps disposal is not typically delivered as a core council service and is more commonly managed through the health system. In keeping with this finding, South Gippsland community sharps disposal will now be more appropriately provided by organisations with the clinical frameworks required to manage the service and associated risks.

To support community members during the transition, Council has provided links on its website to participating Needle and Syringe Program (NSP) locations and has advised local health services that increased demand for their services may occur. From 1 July 2026, existing sharps bins will be removed and temporary signage installed to direct community members to alternative providers. Sharps disposal units (wall safes) located in public toilets will remain.

For more information, please visit: www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/sharps

Quote from the Chief Executive Officer of South Gippsland Shire Council, Allison Jones:

“The Community Sharps Program was originally established as a shared initiative with local health services, however over time Council became the sole provider and funder of the Program.”

“Benchmarking confirmed that sharps disposal services are generally delivered through the health sector, which is better equipped to provide the clinical oversight, infrastructure and long-term service delivery required.”

“Council’s sharps bins in Foster, Korumburra, Leongatha, Mirboo North, Nyora and Tarwin Lower have also experienced ongoing vandalism, misuse and illegal dumping. The bins now require replacement to meet compliance requirements, at an estimated cost of around \$10,000 each. This is in addition to the ongoing operational costs of the program. Given all of this, Council has decided the time is right to exit the service.”