



NEEDLE DISTRIBUTION ALERT

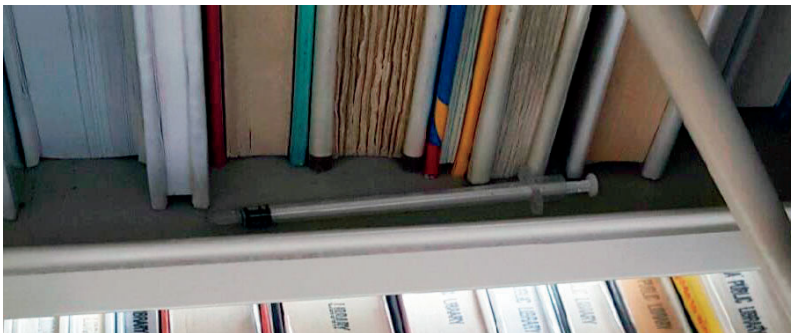
The Harm Reduction Institute has filed an application with the California Department of Public Health to provide needle distribution services in Santa Ana. We have been down this road before. From 2016 to 2018, a needle distribution program in Santa Ana resulted in thousands of used needles and syringes being discarded in public areas frequented by children and senior citizens. These thousands of dirty needles affected public areas like the Civic Center, neighborhoods, businesses, our library, and our senior center.

Needles found at Library, Civic Center, Senior Center

The first needle distribution program had serious negative effects on our community, such as:

- Santa Ana Library staff routinely located **40 to 50 used and discarded needles a month**.
- Dirty needles were found in the public library on the floor, in study areas, on bookshelves, in books, in bathrooms and **in children's areas**.
- Needles were found outside of the library, in parking lots, around government buildings and in strewn about downtown Santa Ana.
- On one day in February 2018, maintenance staff picked up approximately **40 needles** in the Civic Center.
- In February 2018, Santa Ana Senior Center staff picked up approximately **50 needles** at Birch Park in their normal clean-up before opening.
- In response to the number of needles and homeless-related crimes, the City of Santa Ana hired a security company to patrol the Civic Center, including removal of used needles, at a cost of **over \$1 million a year**.
- **250,000 needles** were distributed but never collected.

250,000 needles were handed out, but the provider never collected and safely disposed of them, California Superior Court documents confirmed.



Needles found at Santa Ana Public Library



Photographs by City of Santa Ana

Businesses, neighborhoods and recreational areas affected

In 2017:

- Artists Village Apartments reported finding **"needles on our property ... and our residents are scared."**
- Town Square Condo in downtown reported **"a huge wave of crime, heroin use in the stairwells, needles thrown around, car theft ..."**
- The owner of a downtown Food-4-Less reported that the biggest problem it was facing was **"homeless and needles in the restrooms."**
- The owner of Hill Marine Products on Halladay Street stated its biggest problem was the **"homeless using hypodermic needles"** on the lawn and parking lot.
- Salon Marbella on Bristol Street reported that **"clients are feeling insecure, losing business, people are scared, windows are broken, assaults, needles in restroom..."**
- The owner of AM/PM ARCO on E. 1st Street stated that it needed the City's assistance in addressing **needles in front of the business.**
- The Santa Ana Police Department has presented evidence of projected harm to public safety and increased risk to our community that outweighs any public health benefit.
- **This did not work in Santa Ana BEFORE. Why allow it again?**

Needle distributions never result in one used needle being replaced with one clean needle. For each dirty needle turned in, far more are **abandoned** where they are used and left in our community.

Nearly **14,000** used needles were collected by OC Public Works on the Santa Ana River trail from January to March 2018. Pictured at right.

In their application, the program plans to hand out at least 600 needles to 500 people annually. That's **300,000 needles** total. The program says they **PLAN** to collect 60% of those needles, leaving **120,000 needles unaccounted for.**



Photographs by Orange County Register

Take Action!



Scan code to go to website.

Visit the website below for news from the City of Santa Ana about the status of the needle distribution application and how you can help. Before the HRI application is approved, the California Department of Public Health will open a public comment period, which we will share on this webpage. For any questions, please write us at the email address below.



santa-ana.org/no-needles



NoNeedles@santa-ana.org