Needles and sharps tossed into garbage or recycling can be dangerous for workers. Many MRFs report seeing needles daily or several times a week. Follow these tips to reduce your risk.

1. **Know what to do when you see a needle**
   When you see a needle, follow the employer’s protocol. This might include stopping the line and notifying a trained supervisor to remove it. If no protocol exists for what to do when you see a needle, ask that one be developed.

2. **Use Proper PPE**
   Always use required personal protective equipment (PPE) when on the job, including gloves and other protective body clothing.

3. **Have a plan for needlesticks**
   If you get stuck by a needle or sharps:
   - Wash needlesticks and cuts with soap and water
   - Immediately seek medical treatment
   - Report the incident to your supervisor

4. **Consider changing facility operations or equipment**
   To prevent needles from making it onto the line or being handled, consider pre-sort inspections or using a bag breaker, especially for loads prone to containing needles.

For more #SWANAsafety info and resources visit SWANA.org/safety