

*This is AM for your CC*

*Last Tuesday you may have seen a crowd on 5th street near City Hall. Maybe you were driving and were trying to focus on the road, and didn't get a good look. There were a lot of people protesting, holding signs and making their views known.*

*The Protest was made up of people angry with the City of Eureka's failure to address the dangerously high number of needles on our streets. It's become a pivotal, conversational--focus point that everyone is concerned about.*

*The protestors began at 4:30 and then at 6PM they headed into City Hall to attend the City Council meeting. The place was packed, and the community made it clear that there are too many needles on our streets and that a dangerous situation has gotten out of control.*

*Earlier this year the city council attempted to solve the problem with a new ordinance. It was a disaster. Poorly written--it had very little impact on the controversial health groups handing out needles and it delivered no results.*

*What steps can the City of Eureka take to reign in these Free Needle Exchanges?*

*It's a good question, and perhaps the biggest trouble is that by definition, the city is allowing an illegal transaction to play out. As I heard the City manager say, (quote) "there is no good example of a needle exchange."*

*The idea of giving drug addicts clean needles has become very popular in liberal states. In California, the counties bordering the Pacific Coastline have needle exchange programs, while the more conservative interior counties go without. The argument is that if health workers can give a drug addict a clean needle, that there can be an opportunity to make sure that they know how to safely inject the illegal drug into their system. Many needles exchanges go even further, with a staff member that will test the purity of the drugs, to make sure the addict can safely get his illegal dose. Supporters argue that druggies are going to do drugs anyway, so we need to help them do it safely. There are now needle exchanges in several states across America.*

*What the supporters fail to realize, is that each and every time an addict engages in self-destructive behavior, he tears down his self esteem, his self worth, and worst of all, the addict is digging himself into an even deeper hole. The more these programs enable the harder for the addict to collect himself and strive for recovery. By dangling the needle as an option that is always available, the needle exchange is engaging in enabling, and not treatment. And if I may, this is ultimately what we get, when we insist on calling drug use a disease.*

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