

DAILY NEWS

Murky laws endangering New York's syringe exchange programs: study

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Friday, January 29th 2010, 4:00 AM

Aggressive policing and murky state laws are endangering [New York's](#) syringe exchange programs, a new study found.

"Police are arresting people for syringe possession, even if they participate in a lawful syringe access program and have documentation proving it," says the study, which also accuses cops of targeting exchange sites.

Since 1992, syringe possession has been legal in New York when it's in conjunction with "safe syringe access" program enrollment. But carrying a clean syringe or a used one with trace amounts of drugs can also mean being charged with a misdemeanor, study participants reported.

The practice impacts syringe programs that are helping curb HIV and Hepatitis C, said [Sean Barry](#), head of [NYC AIDS Housing Network](#) and study author.

"There are both sanctions against drug paraphernalia and allowances under the syringe program," [NYPD](#) Deputy Commissioner Deputy [Paul Browne](#) responded.

But he said he was unable last night "to evaluate the veracity of their claims about the lack of distinction between the two."