



Public Education Committee

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Guidelines for Proper Disposal of Drugs and Medications

*Municipal Water Quality
Public Educational Information*



PA Water Environment Association

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Federal Government Issues New Guidelines For Proper Disposal of Prescription Drugs

In the face of rising trends in prescription drug abuse, the Federal government recently issued new guidelines for the proper disposal of unused, unneeded, or expired prescription drugs. The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) jointly released the new guidelines, which are designed to reduce the diversion of prescription drugs, while also protecting the environment.

The new Federal prescription drug disposal guidelines urge Americans to:

- Take unused, unneeded, or expired prescription drugs out of their original containers. Then mix the prescription drugs with an undesirable substance, like used coffee grounds or kitty litter, and put them in impermeable, non-descript containers, such as empty cans or sealable bags, further ensuring that the drugs are not diverted or accidentally ingested by children or pets.
- Then throw these containers in the trash.
- Return unused, unneeded, or expired prescription drugs to pharmaceutical take-back locations that allow the public to bring unused drugs to a central location for safe disposal. A secure Pharmaceutical/Medication Drop Box is located at Borough Hall, 45 Railroad Street, Kutztown, PA 19530, Monday-Friday, 8am-4:30pm.
- **Please do not flush hypodermic needles.** The presence of these needles in the wastewater collection system presents special and possibly deadly problems for wastewater collection and wastewater treatment

employees. The proper method of disposal is to re-cap the needle and put it into a “sharps container”. (This could be any rigid plastic container such as a bleach bottle... no milk bottles please.) When it is full, tape the container securely, and call your local pharmacy for advice on proper disposal methods. **PLEASE DO NOT FLUSH THEM OR THROW THEM INTO THE GARBAGE!**

*Don't flush meds
down the drain!*

