

Dispose of unwanted medication by using new disposal boxes

Written by
Thursday, 08 March 2012 14:30



Hennepin County residents have begun dropping off unwanted and expired medications by using three new medicine disposal boxes.

During a community kick-off event held recently, Hennepin County Sheriff Rich Stanek demonstrated how to use a disposal box at Sheriff's Patrol in Brooklyn Park.

"This is a great time for a spring cleaning and I encourage all residents to remove expired or unwanted medicines from their homes," said Sheriff Stanek, "This is a safety precaution that every parent and grandparent should take in order to help reduce the risk of medicine abuse among teens and young adults."

According to the Centers for Disease Control, medication abuse is an epidemic in the U.S. One in five teens reports abusing prescription medications. Teens who wouldn't use illicit drugs might abuse prescriptions. Among young children, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of accidental poisonings from medications found in the home.

Properly disposing of unused medicines helps to protect the environment. Medicines flushed down the drain or disposed of in the trash can contaminate bodies of water, harm wildlife and end up in drinking water supplies.

Medicines that are placed into disposal boxes are collected by the Sheriff's Office and then incinerated. Incineration is the most environmentally-friendly method of disposal.

The three locations and hours for the new medicine drop-off boxes are:

- Hennepin County Sheriff's Patrol Headquarters
9401 83rd Ave. N. in Brooklyn Park
Hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Hennepin County Sheriff's Water Patrol

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4141 Shoreline Drive in Spring Park

Hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

- Hennepin County Public Safety Facility
401 Fourth Ave. S. in downtown Minneapolis
Hours: 24 hours a day, seven days a week
You are required to go through a metal detector at this location.

Materials accepted

Medicine from households will be accepted, including:

- Prescription medicines, including controlled substances
- Over-the-counter medicines
- Vitamins and supplements
- Pet medicines

Not accepted

- No needles, sharps or syringes
- No liquids
- No medicines from businesses

Guidelines

- No ID required.
- Bring medicines in their original container or packaging.
- If medicines are no longer in their original packaging, place loose pills in a clear plastic bag.
- The boxes are self-serve

For more information, visit www.hennepin.us/medicine or call Hennepin County Environmental Services at 612-348-3777.