



DEP Develops Guidelines for Proper Disposal of Household Medication

The Department has developed the following guidelines for individuals and households on how to properly dispose of their over-the-counter and prescription medication in a safe manner that protects the environment and public health. Doctors, pharmacies, and health care professionals are encouraged to share this information with their clientele. The Department wishes to emphasize that these are guidelines that apply only to households and individuals and will in no way effect the legal or regulatory obligations of any other entity.

What should you do?

All residents should dispose of excess, expired, or unwanted prescription and over-the-counter medication by following these four simple steps:

Step 1



Mark out personal information

Step 2



Mix with water and coffee grinds, cat litter, or dirt

Step 3



Place in opaque container

Step 4



Hide in the trash

Over the counter and prescription medications should not be disposed down the drain because wastewater treatment facilities are not designed to remove pharmaceutical compounds and they may end up in your local waterways, and may eventually be found in your drinking water. Properly disposing of unwanted and expired prescriptions and over-the-counter medications in the trash promotes a healthy aquatic environment and prevents accidental poisoning and intentional abuse.

What is DEP doing?

The Department is sharing these newly developed guidelines with members of the public, health care professionals, and agencies within the state that may be interested. The Department is also encouraging New Jersey residents to adopt these disposal practices to protect human health and the environment.

COMPLIANCE ADVISORY

Who should I contact with questions?

Please contact Julie Townsend at:

NJ Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Compliance and Enforcement
Office of Local Environmental Management
P.O. Box 422
401 E. State Street
Trenton, NJ 08625-0422

Julie.Townsend@dep.state.nj.us
(609) 292-1305

Where can I get more information?

The following web site can be accessed for additional information regarding this advisory:

Disposal Guidelines http://www.nj.gov/dep/docs/Prescription_Med_Disposal.pdf
Regulated Medical Waste <http://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/rrtp/rmw.htm>

Visit the following Web site for general information:

Contact NJDEP: <http://www.nj.gov/cgi-bin/dep/contactdep.pl>

To comment on this advisory:

<http://www.nj.gov/dep/enforcement/survey.html>

Please note this advisory is intended to be a summary explanation of a department initiative. It does not include all potentially applicable requirements. If you have any questions related to compliance with this initiative, please contact the number listed above.