

DPH Encourages Residents to Participate in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day

DOVER – On Saturday, Oct. 26, 2019, Delaware residents can safely dispose of their unused or expired prescription medications at designated sites throughout the state as part of the 18th National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day.

Organized nationally by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Division of Public Health (DPH) operates the event at the local level. The twice-a-year event is aimed at reducing the risk of prescription medications being diverted for misuse, and has resulted in over 85,000 pounds of medication being collected since 2010. Properly discarding unused medications is an important tool for keeping prescription medications out of the hands of people who may misuse, abuse, or sell them, and helps reduce the risk of drug overdoses.

According to the 2018 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 9.9 million Americans misused controlled prescription drugs. The study shows that a majority of abused prescription drugs were obtained from family and friends, often from the home medicine cabinet.

“Addiction oftentimes begins with prescription medications,” said Dr. Karyl Rattay, director of Delaware’s Division of Public Health. “Unsecured prescriptions can be misused or stolen, or worse, they can become the gateway to illicit drugs such as heroin or fentanyl. The best way to stop addiction is to prevent it. Disposing of unused or expired medications is the best way to keep yourself or your loved ones safe.”

Delaware has the highest rate of high-dose and long-acting opioid prescriptions written in the nation, and has the sixth-highest drug overdose rate, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Unused medications when not disposed of, can lead to misuse, accidental overdose or poisoning. It is a public health and safety issue.

In 2018, 400 people died from drug overdoses in Delaware, according to the state's Division of Forensic Science, an increase of 15 percent from the 346 individuals who died in 2017. Many of those overdoses involved opioids.

Last April, Delaware residents returned 4,693 pounds of unused or expired prescription medications at 26 collection sites throughout the state. DPH leadership is encouraging residents to return even more medications at the October event.

The service is free, and no personal information will be collected at drop-off locations. Medications for disposal must be in a container such as a pill bottle, box, blister pack, or zipped plastic bag, with personal information removed. Liquid medications must be in their original containers. Needles, aerosols, biohazard materials, medical equipment and batteries will not be accepted.

In Delaware, the following locations will accept medications between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.:

KENT COUNTY

- Delaware State Police Troop 3, 3759 South State St., Camden-Wyoming
- Dover Place, 1203 Walker Road, Dover
- Atlantic Apothecary, 103 S. Dupont Blvd., Smyrna

NEW CASTLE COUNTY

- Delaware City Police Dept., 407 Clinton St., Delaware City
- Middletown Police Dept., 130 Hampden Road, Middletown
- New Castle County Airport, 151 North Dupont Highway, New Castle

- Christiana Care SurgiCenter, 4755 Ogletown-Stanton Road, Newark
- Delaware State Police Troop 2, 100 Lagrange Ave., Newark
- Newark Police Dept., 220 South Main St., Newark
- Shipley Manor Nursing Home, 2723 Shipley Road, Wilmington
- Wilmington VA Hospital, 1601 Kirkwood Highway, Wilmington

SUSSEX COUNTY

- Delaware State Police Troop 7, 18006 Coastal Highway, Lewes
- Lewes Ferry Terminal, 43 Cape Henlopen Drive, Lewes
- Milford Police Department, 400 NE Front St., Milford
- Milton Police Department, 101 Federal St., Milton
- Ocean View Police Dept., 201 Central Ave., Ocean View
- CVS Pharmacy, 36252 Lighthouse Road, Selbyville
- Selbyville Town Hall, 1 W. Church St., Selbyville

While National Prescription Take-Back Day happens only twice a year, it is important for Delaware residents to know that they can drop off their unused or expired prescription medications year-round at any of the state's 21 designated drop-box locations. Visit

<https://www.helpsherede.com/Get-Help/Prescription-Drug-Drop-Box> for a list of disposal sites in New Castle, Kent and Sussex counties.

A person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind or speech-disabled can call the DPH phone number above by using TTY services. Dial 7-1-1 or 800-232-5460 to type your conversation to a relay operator, who reads your conversation to a hearing person at DPH. The relay operator types the hearing person's spoken words back to the TTY user. To learn more about TTY availability in Delaware, visit <http://delawarerelay.com>.

Delaware's Department of Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of the lives of Delaware's citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations. DPH, a division of DHSS, urges Delawareans to make healthier choices

with the 5-2-1 Almost None campaign: eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day, have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time each day (includes TV, computer, gaming), get 1 or more hours of physical activity each day, and drink almost no sugary beverages.