



Sheboygan County Planning & Conservation Department

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

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DIRECTOR

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WASTE MEDICATION COLLECTION IN SHEBOYGAN COUNTY

Almost three billion drug prescriptions will be dispensed this year nationwide. Many more over the counter medications will be purchased. A significant portion of these drugs will never be used and will require disposal. Getting rid of unwanted prescription or over-the-counter medications has historically meant flushing them down the toilet. This is no longer the best advice. Water treatment facilities and septic systems are not designed to remove medications and so they can enter water supplies. Recent studies by the United States Geological Survey have found antibiotics, hormones, pain relievers, and other medications in 80% of the waterways throughout the United States. The long-term impact of medication ending up in our rivers, lakes, and even our drinking water is unclear. However, studies suggest that the release of antibiotics into the environment may encourage the development of drug-resistant pathogens. Hormones from medicines and birth control pills are suspected to cause reproductive problems in fish and other organisms. In some cases, male wildlife become feminized and grow female reproductive tissue.

Waste medication disposed in the trash can be stolen and misused, potentially resulting in death or illness. Drugs put in the trash and taken to a landfill can also leach into water supplies.

Please do not dispose of unused or waste medications down the toilet or in the trash.

Safely store all medicine!

Unsafe storage of medications presents a danger to children, guests, and pets that could accidentally ingest the drugs. Go through all your medicines (prescription and nonprescription) at least once a year. Check the expiration dates and look for medicine that is discolored, dried out, crumbling, or shows other signs of being degraded. Look for leftover medicines that you no longer need. After identifying the medicines you want to keep, store them in a convenient, but cool, dark, and dry location. (The bathroom cabinet may not be a good storage place for most medicines due to heat and humidity.) Always keep medicine in its original container.

Child-resistant caps should be used if children live in your home or visit. Store all medicines out of sight and reach of children—in a locked cabinet or one with safety latches. A majority of medicine bottles used by seniors do not have child-resistant closures. A high percentage of accidental childhood poisoning episodes in the United States can be traced to a grandparent's medication. Do not leave children unattended where they have access to medicine bottles.

Put waste medicines in a safe place where you won't confuse them with currently used medication and where others can't get to them. Store them in their original container. Never give medicines to another person—it is dangerous and illegal!

Wondering what to do with leftover or expired medications? Do not flush them down the toilet or pour them down the drain! Instead, use the drop boxes currently located at the Sheboygan, Plymouth, Sheboygan Falls, Kohler, and Elkhart Lake Police Departments. It's that simple.

Why go to the trouble? The proper disposal of unwanted medications is important so we do not pollute our environment or affect our health. Water quality is negatively impacted when leftover medications are flushed

or poured down the drain. Wastewater treatment plants and septic systems do not process the drugs. In fact, research has shown some aquatic organisms living downstream of treatment plants are showing signs of developmental and reproductive issues.

Public safety is another good reason unwanted pharmaceuticals should be properly disposed. If unintentionally swallowed by a child, pet, or guest the potential consequences are dire. Furthermore, prescription medications include a host of personal information, including a person's name, address and phone number. Improper disposal could lead to that information falling into the undesirable hands of a criminal and result in identity theft.

Rather than holding sporadic collection events as in year's past, the drop boxes at the police stations allow for greater convenience and are available whenever the doors to the building are open. All deposits are anonymous. Please deposit medications in their original bottles. You may black out the name of the person to whom the medication is prescribed for and the prescription number. **Please do not black out the name or the dosage of the prescription drug!**

If you have any questions, please call the Sheboygan County Planning & Conservation Department at (920) 459-3060.

Drop Box Locations

Sheboygan Police Department
1315 North 23rd St #101
Sheboygan, WI

Sheboygan Falls Police Department
375 Buffalo Street
Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085

Plymouth Police Department
128 Smith St
Plymouth, WI

Elkhart Lake Police Department
40 Pine St
Elkhart Lake, WI

Kohler Police Department
319 Highland Dr
Kohler, WI