



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



Bennington Ready to Take Back Unused Prescription Drugs Any Day

*April 26 is National Prescription Drug Take Back Day
More than 50 Collection Sites in Vermont*



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BENNINGTON – Judith Fellows-Miller, a substance abuse prevention consultant for the Health Department, is not prone to exaggeration, but she calls the collective effort to take back and dispose of unused drugs in Bennington a “rose in the garden of public health.”

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day is Saturday, April 26. The Health Department’s Bennington District Office has worked closely with the Bennington County Prescription Drug Task Force, the Collaborative in Manchester, Southwestern Vermont Medical Center and local pharmacists to encourage the community to collect and dispose of unused drugs by mail, drop-off, or by scheduling a pick up.

The group meets monthly and has been surprised by the volume of drugs collected each week.

“We could not have been so successful without the right players and it has really been a team effort – the entire community has been involved and supportive,” Fellows-Miller said. “Even the drop box for the drugs was designed by local high school students.”

A recent national survey shows that more than 70 percent of youth age 12 and older who abused prescription pain relievers got them from friends or relatives. Safely storing and disposing of expired or unused prescription medications is critical to preventing misuse.

Bennington County Sherriff Chad Schmidt said the key to the success of the problem was a comprehensive approach that worked to educate the community. Collecting the drugs needed to be viewed as a community program, not a law enforcement initiative.

“I knew if we were going to tell people prescription drug use was a problem, we had to dedicate resources to the solution,” Schmidt said.

“The people in Bennington know how to work with a lot of different people toward a common goal,” Fellows-Miller said. “They know how to bring out the best in everyone.”

Bennington is one of more than 50 collection sites in the state – go to DEA.gov to find one in your area.

RESOURCES –

For a listing of agencies that offer drug disposal throughout the year – dial 2-1-1 or go to Vermont211.org - or - the **Vermont Department of Public Safety Drug Diversion Unit**

If a drug take-back or collection program is not available – follow **federal** and **state** guidelines for proper disposal of prescription and over-the-counter medications

Prescription drug disposal information cards in 6 languages – Northern New England Poison Center

Lock Your Meds – National Family Partnership campaign

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