



Department of Health  
Agency of Human Services



## It's Time to Dispose of Vermont's Most Dangerous Leftovers



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*April 30 is National Prescription Drug Take Back Day*

BURLINGTON – Many people who abuse prescription painkillers get them from family and friends – often straight out of the medicine cabinet where the drugs may sit long after they are needed. Vermonters can dispose of these expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs this Saturday, April 30, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. as part of the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day.

More than 60 collection sites will be set up around the state, where people can quickly and anonymously drop off their unused medications. The sites will be staffed by local and state police and county sheriff departments, as part of a nationwide effort led by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

Last year, more than 5,800 pounds – nearly 3 tons – of prescription drugs were collected for disposal at Vermont sites.

The Health Department wants Vermonters to know that safe disposal of drugs is one of the three simple but important ways to prevent opioid addiction.

“Prescription drugs that are left in medicine cabinets are susceptible to diversion, misuse, and abuse. Sometimes with tragic consequences,” said Health Commissioner Harry Chen, MD. “We want people to know that the safe use, safe storage, and safe disposal of prescription medications will help keep these drugs out of the hands of those who should not have them, reducing the risk of addiction and overdose.”

Chen said that “safe use” also means taking steps to get only what you absolutely need. In a [video](#) available on the Health Department website, Dr. Chen encourages people to talk with their doctor when getting a prescription. “Ask your doctor, do you really need it, and do you really need that much? Because you can get addicted, even if it’s prescribed by a doctor.”

Local drug take-back programs also provide a safe way to dispose of medications, because most prescription drugs should not be flushed down the toilet or washed down the sink. Proper disposal of drugs helps avoid harming water sources, wildlife, pets, and people. Syringes and other sharps should not be brought to a Take Back site. Tips for safe handling and disposal of sharps are available at:

[http://healthvermont.gov/adap/documents/sharps\\_disposal\\_flyer.pdf](http://healthvermont.gov/adap/documents/sharps_disposal_flyer.pdf).

To find the disposal site nearest you, dial 2-1-1, or visit <https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/SEARCH-NTBI/>

See the video and learn more about Vermont's Most Dangerous Leftovers, at <http://healthvermont.gov/adap/RxOTC Abuse.aspx>

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