

To: Lake County Communities, County and Local Agencies, Lake Hospital System, Pharmacies, Physicians, Nursing & Assisted Living Facilities, Senior Centers, Libraries, Funeral Homes, & Veterinarians

From: Lake County General Health District
Laura Kramer Kuns, R.S.
Supervisor of Liquid/Solid Waste & Water Supply Programs

Re: Lake County Pharmaceutical Drug Collection & Disposal Program

The Lake County General Health District and the Lake County Solid Waste District began a program on December 8, 2010 for the continuous collection and disposal of pharmaceutical drugs. Lake County residents have been both supportive and appreciative of the program and have disposed of over 2000 pounds of their unwanted and expired prescription and non-prescription medications. The program has been so successful that two additional locations were set up in Willoughby and Eastlake. Residents can continue to use the collection bins at one of seven law enforcement departments throughout the county as follows:

Lake County Sheriff's Office
104 East Erie St.
Painesville

Mentor Police Department
8500 Civic Center Blvd.
Mentor

Willoughby Hills Police Department
35405 Chardon Rd.
Willoughby Hills

Madison Township Police Department
2065 Hubbard Rd.
Madison

Willoughby Police Department
35405 Euclid Ave.
Willoughby

Eastlake Police Department
35150 Lakeshore Blvd.
Eastlake

Lakeland Community College Police Department
7700 Clocktower Dr., Building A, lower level
Kirtland

Each of these law enforcement departments have a collection bin in their department where Lake county residents can bring their unwanted and expired prescriptions, cold/flu medications, pain relievers, pet medications, vitamins, creams, cough syrups, pills and prescription pain killers. Residents should remove or black out the personal information on pharmacy labels and leave the medicines in the original package or container. Residents should be advised that absolutely no needles or syringes are permitted in these bins.

The disposal hours for all the locations are convenient being Monday through Friday 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Saturday 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM and Sunday from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM, the only exception is that there are no Sunday hours at Lakeland.

There are two major reasons for using the Lake County collection bins: Environmental Concerns and Public Safety. Prescription and non-prescription are being found in our rivers, streams and ground water. These drugs are considered to be "emerging contaminants of concern" partly due to the harmful effects that low concentrations are already having on the fish population. Our existing wastewater treatment plants and septic systems are not designed to remove these contaminants. Residents can help to reduce the amount of these contaminants in our environment by utilizing the collection bins instead of flushing unwanted drugs down the toilet or putting them in the trash.

According to statistics from the US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), prescription pain relievers are the new drug users' drug of choice versus marijuana or cocaine. By partnering with law enforcement in this program, it allows residents to bring in prescription pain killers such as oxycodone and hydrocodone commonly known as Percocet, Vicodin and OxyContin. Removing these narcotics from the medicine cabinet and properly disposing of them will help to reduce the potential of drug abuse and accidental drug misuse.

Another important partner is the Lake County Narcotics Agency who supports the law enforcement departments in central collection, storage, transport and destruction of the collected medications. Destruction of the drugs will take place by incineration.

This drug collection and disposal program was made possible by a grant from the Lake Erie Protection Fund through the Ohio Lake Erie Commission. The monies for the Lake Erie Protection Fund are supported by the citizens of Ohio through their purchase of the Lake Erie License Plate. Additional grant monies were contributed to this project by the Lake County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board and enabled the addition of the two new locations in Eastlake and Willoughby.

For more information on the Lake County Pharmaceutical Drug Collection and Disposal Program, contact Laura Kuns at (440) 350-2543 or visit www.lcghd.org/pharmaceutical. Both the Health District and the Solid Waste District are encouraging your organization to place this link on your website for residents to access information on the program.