



Hennepin County News

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Hennepin County medicine collection events scheduled for Brooklyn Center and Richfield

What: Hennepin County is providing residents the opportunity to properly and safely dispose of their unwanted, expired and unused medicines at two upcoming medicine collection events. There is no charge for bringing in medications. Because of the possible presence of controlled substances and confidentiality issues, there are certain restrictions for both residents and media.

Who: For Hennepin County residents only

Where **Brooklyn Center: Saturday, April 30** 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
When Brooklyn Center City Hall, 6301 Shingle Creek Parkway (use north entrance at the intersection of Shingle Creek Parkway and I-94)

Richfield: Thursday, June 2 3 to 7 p.m.
Richfield Ice Arena, 636 66th St. E. (use east entrance)

Why: The Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, Hennepin County Environmental Services, and the cities of Brooklyn Center and Richfield are sponsoring the medicine collection events. To assure compliance with federal regulations for controlled substances, Hennepin County Sheriff's deputies will oversee collection of medications. Media will be asked to remain in a designated area, which has a view of collection activities.

Medications in the home have become a problem for a number of reasons:

- Unwanted, expired and unused medications in the home pose safety and health threats and can lead to abuse or poisoning.
- Prescription drug abuse is a growing problem, especially among teens. Most teenagers abusing prescription drugs get them from family and friends – and from the home medicine cabinet.
- The non-medical use of prescription drugs ranks second only to marijuana as the most common form of drug abuse in America.

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Medicine collection event/2

- Prescriptions are only safe for the person they are prescribed for. Pharmaceutical drugs can be just as dangerous as street drugs when taken without a prescription or a doctor's supervision.
- Prescription drugs most often abused are painkillers (Vicodin, Tylenol with codeine, OxyContin and Percocet), depressants (Xanax, Valium, Nembutal), stimulants (Adderall, Ritalin, Concerta), and over-the-counter cough medicines.
- Medications are a major law enforcement problem because some of the drugs are controlled substances, and it is very difficult to legally dispose of them.
- Disposal of unwanted medications also raises environmental concerns. Medicines flushed down the drain or disposed of in the trash can contaminate bodies of water, harm wildlife and end up in drinking water supplies.

Directions for residents:

- Bring your bottles/packages of medications in a clear plastic bag.
- Medications that can be brought include:
 - Prescription and over-the-counter medications
 - Vitamins and supplements
 - Pet medications
- Keep medications in the original packaging so they can be identified. If the medication has been removed from the original container, put it in a clear plastic bag and write the name and dosage of the medicine on the bag if you know it.
- Medicines will be accepted in any form – ampoules, blister packs, capsules, creams, cylinders, gels, inhalers, IV bags, liquids, patches, pills, powders, sprays, vials, etc.
- Items not accepted: needles or sharps; medicines from businesses, including health-care facilities, long-term-care facilities, pharmacies, doctors' offices, pharmaceutical sales representatives or veterinary clinics.
- When you arrive at the event, staff will assist and direct you.
- Follow the signs, stay in your car and stay in line. If turnout is high, you may need to wait in line.

Media are welcome to attend the events and are asked to identify themselves to Sheriff's Office deputies when they arrive.

Hennepin County held its first medicine collection event last September in **St. Louis Park**. Nearly 700 people delivered 1,740 pounds of materials – 60 percent were prescription and 38 percent over-the-counter medicines. The average age of participants was 64.

Two more medicine collection events will be held this fall in **St. Louis Park** and **Orono**.

Can't make it to the event, or need more information? Visit www.hennepin.us/medicine or call Hennepin County Environmental Services at 612-348-3777 Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. A recording will provide information after hours.