

# Safely Dispose of Unused Medications: *Don't Flush and Don't Trash;* Find a Drop Box in Your Area!

For decades, it was common to dispose of unwanted pharmaceuticals by flushing them. Wastewater treatment plants and septic systems are not equipped to handle pharmaceutical waste, meaning that trace amounts end up in local drinking water supplies. Flushing is no longer recommended for disposal, yet many continue this practice. Throwing drugs in the trash is also not recommended, as it puts our families at risk of accidental poisonings, theft, and abuse.

Here are just some of the problems associated with improper disposal of medications:

- **Contaminates drinking water sources:** 41 million Americans get their drinking water from a source contaminated with trace amounts of pharmaceuticals.
- **Causes pollution across the nation:** A 2002 Survey study found that 80% of water tested contained trace amounts of antibiotics, hormones, contraceptives and steroids.
- **Harms aquatic life:** Medications, once in our waterways, can cause reproductive health defects in aquatic life, particularly fish.
- **Impacts human health:** While the public health impact of this pollution in our waters requires more research, there are concerns about the health risk long-term effects to humans.
- **Contributes to the drug abuse epidemic:** 70% of prescription drug abusers

obtain them from family or friends. Storing unused drugs in household medicine cabinets or disposing of drugs in the trash can lead to abuse, theft or accidental poisonings.



**The solution is simple—find a med drop box near you:**

Most police departments in Onondaga County, **OCC and SUNY ESF** have a safe med disposal drop box for your use. Since the program was launched in 2015, over 2 tons of unused medications have been collected and properly disposed!



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# Rx Drop Box Facts!



- **What can be disposed of in a medicine drop box:** You can safely and anonymously dispose of all unused or expired prescription medications, over-the-counter (OTC) medications, controlled substances (pain meds, sleeping aids, etc.), medicated ointments and lotions for FREE at ANY drop box location in Onondaga County!
- **Items NOT accepted at drop boxes include:** Illicit drugs, hazardous waste, IV bags, needles/sharps (ONLY at designated kiosks), and thermometers.
- **Where to dispose of needles/sharps:** You cannot dispose of needles/sharps in the medicine drop boxes. Simply dispose of needles/sharps in sharps kiosks at select Police Departments or at OCC.
- **How to use a medicine drop box:** Keep any medication in the original container; bring meds to a drop box location to drop the container in the box.
- **The safest way to dispose of unused medications is to drop them in a med box!** Throwing medication in the garbage can lead to accidental poisonings, theft, or intentional misuse even if they are mixed with undesirable materials. Flushing unused medication can pollute lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater.
- **What happens to the medications after I drop them off?** Medications collected at drop boxes in Onondaga County are incinerated at Covanta, Onondaga County's waste-to-energy plant.

Learn more about safe med disposal and see an interactive map of drop box locations in the county at [www.citizenscampaign.org](http://www.citizenscampaign.org)

## DROP BOX LOCATIONS

**BALDWINSVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT \***  
16 West Genesee Street, Baldwinsville, NY 13027

**CAMILLUS POLICE DEPARTMENT \***  
4600 West Genesee Street, Syracuse, NY 13219

**Cicero Police Department \***  
8236 South Main Street, Cicero, NY 13039

**DEWITT POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
5400 Butternut Drive, E. Syracuse, NY 13057

**GEDDES POLICE DEPARTMENT \***  
1000 Woods Rd, Solvay, NY 13209

**JORDAN POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
7 Mechanic Street, Jordan, NY 13080

**MANLIUS POLICE DEPARTMENT \***  
1 Arkie Albanese Ave. Manlius, NY 13104

**MARCELLUS POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
6 Slocombe Avenue, Marcellus, NY 13108

**SOLVAY POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
507 Charles Ave, Solvay, NY 13209

**SYRACUSE POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
511 S State St, Syracuse, NY 13202

**SUNY ESF CAMPUS POLICE**  
1 Forestry Drive, 19 Bray Hall, Syracuse, NY 13210

**SUNY OCC CAMPUS POLICE \***  
Campus Security Building, 4941 Onondaga Rd  
Syracuse, NY 13215

\* Indicates facilities with needle/sharps receptacle