

NEWS RELEASE

WEST SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT TAKING BACK UNWANTED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS APRIL 30, 2011 AT THE WEST SPRINGFIELD TOWN HALL.

WEST SPRINGFIELD, MA – On April 30 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. the West Springfield Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) will give the public another opportunity to prevent pill abuse and theft by ridding their homes of potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs. Bring your medications for disposal to the lobby of the West Springfield Town Hall at 26 Central Street, West Springfield, MA. The service is free and anonymous, no questions asked.

Last September, Americans turned in 242,000 pounds—121 tons—of prescription drugs at nearly 4,100 sites operated by the DEA and more than 3,000 state and local law enforcement partners, including the West Springfield Police Department.

This initiative addresses a vital public safety and public health issue. Medicines that languish in home cabinets are highly susceptible to diversion, misuse, and abuse. Rates of prescription drug abuse in the U.S. are alarmingly high, as are the number of accidental poisonings and overdoses due to these drugs. Studies show that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including from the home medicine cabinet. In addition, Americans are now advised that their usual methods for disposing of unused medicines—flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the trash—both pose potential safety and health hazards.

Four days after last fall's event, Congress passed the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act of 2010, which amends the Controlled Substances Act to allow an "ultimate user" of controlled substance medications to dispose of them by delivering them to entities authorized by the Attorney General to accept them. The Act also allows the Attorney General to authorize long term care facilities to dispose of their residents' controlled substances in certain instances. DEA has begun drafting regulations to implement the Act.

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