

Due to demonstrated adverse effects to fish and other aquatic wildlife, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency no longer recommends disposal of medications by flushing them down the drain.

In addition, studies now show that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including from the home medicine cabinet. Keep your family safe by disposing of unwanted medications the right way and as soon as they are no longer needed. If you can't use the Take-it-to-the-Box sites, your unwanted medications may still be disposed of in your trash. Here's how:

1. Keep the medication in its original container and scratch out or cover the patient's name.
2. Add water to pills or capsules in the bottle, or salt, flour or powdered mustard to liquids to discourage consumption, then securely tape container shut.
3. Wrap blister packs in multiple layers of duct tape.
4. Place it inside a non-transparent bag or lidded container (margarine tub will work) and tape the lid securely. Put it in with your trash.

DO NOT PUT IN WITH RECYCLING.

Find current locations available and more information at

<http://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/LANDPROPERTY/GarbageRecycling/HouseholdMedicalWaste.aspx>



Why are unused medications a problem?

Old and unused medicines in your home can pose a risk for accidental poisoning, theft, and drug abuse. Rates of prescription drug abuse in the U.S. are alarmingly high; almost twice as many Americans (6.8 million) currently abuse prescription drugs than the number of those abusing cocaine, hallucinogens, heroin, and inhalants combined, according to the 2012 National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

Additional resources:
<http://www.epa.gov/ppcp>
<http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/>
<http://toxics.usgs.gov/regional/emc/index.html>
www.stlouiscounty.org/hw

For more information on disposal of medications and other household chemical wastes call the St. Louis County Solid Waste Division at 1-800-450-9278 or:

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE FACILITIES
218-741-8831

5345 Regional Landfill Road, Virginia
Open Tuesdays and Saturdays, 8am - 1pm

3994 Landfill Road, Hibbing
Open Saturdays, 8am - 1pm

Proper Disposal of Household Medical Wastes

Information on disposal of home-use needles, lancets and waste medication in St. Louis County, Minnesota.

SAINT LOUIS COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
BETTER WASTE SOLUTIONS

St. Louis County Environmental Services Department

218-749-9703
1-800-450-9278

The Problem with Household Medical Wastes

The 1989 Minnesota Infectious Waste Control Act outlined management practices for infectious waste generated in medical facilities. However, it did not include infectious waste generated in homes, particularly sharps; for example needles, syringes, and lancets. Because self-administered home health care waste is exempt from state infectious waste laws and rules, it can be disposed of with your household garbage.

Household sharps are very common in household garbage. The American Diabetes Association estimates that more than a billion needles alone are thrown out each year by diabetics who self-administer insulin.

Increasing numbers of garbage haulers and solid waste facility operators are aware of and concerned about the risks posed by home health care waste in the trash. Needles are of particular concern because of the possibility of worker injury due to puncture wounds and the fear of transmission of diseases, such as hepatitis and AIDS.



Proper Disposal of Used Household Sharps in St. Louis County

Do not purchase red infectious waste containers. They will not be accepted if placed in the garbage. Residents should:

1. Recap your sharp.
2. Collect sharps in a two-liter plastic bottle or detergent jug.
3. When bottle is full replace cap and tape securely.
4. Clearly label the bottle "Household Sharps".
5. Place in the trash.

DO NOT PUT IN WITH RECYCLING!

If you have garbage collection from your home, check with your hauler for their preferred method of disposal. If you bring your trash to a County facility, let them know that you have sharps in your load.

Your help will reduce the risks of health hazards or injury to yourself and to our workers.



What to do with unwanted medications.

TAKE-IT-TO-THE-BOX!

Pharmaceutical collections available at these locations.

Babbitt Police Department
71 South Drive
24 hours

Eveleth Police Department
415 Pierce St.
Monday - Friday 8am - 4:30pm

Ely City Hall
209 E. Chapman St.
Monday - Friday 8am - 4pm

Floodwood City Hall
111 8th Ave. W.
Monday - Friday 8am - 4:30pm

Gilbert Police Department
16 Broadway St. South
Monday - Friday 8am - 5pm

Hibbing Sheriff's Department
1810 12th Ave. E.
Monday - Friday 8am—4:30pm

Virginia Sheriff's Department
300 South 5th Ave
Monday - Friday 8am - 4:30pm



We accept:
Prescription medications in any form from households.

- Pills and capsules
- Blister Packs
- Creams and gels
- Inhalers
- IV bags
- Liquids
- Patches
- Powders
- Sprays
- Vials

St. Louis County Environmental Services Department

St. Louis County
Environmental Services Department
307 First St. S., Suite 115
Virginia, MN 55792

218-749-9703
1-800-450-9278