

## Disposing of Expired or Unused Medication

Some of prescription and over-the-counter medications can cause environmental damage if disposed in the sewer system because they are not adequately destroyed by sewer treatment plants and can enter the water supply. Disposing medications down the sink or toilet is no longer recommended since many of the substances have been identified in the water supply.

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection has advised the Township of Wyckoff that all prescription medications should be safely disposed of by the following:

Keep medicine in original container. Mark out personal information on prescription containers.

Dispose of pills or capsules in household trash, dilute with water, then add coffee grinds, cat litter or dirt. Mix any liquid medicine with any of the same substances. Place containers inside an opaque container such as a yogurt container, and secure the lid. Dispose in trash.

Wrap glass vials of injectable medications in layers of absorbent materials (such as a rag or paper towel) then place in a plastic bag. Tie bag securely and hit with hammer on a hard surface to break glass. Dispose of entire package in household trash.

Unwrap prescription suppositories and dispose suppositories and foil wrappers household trash.

Syringes containing medication should be expelled into paper towels, which should be bagged and disposed of in the household trash. Used empty syringes should be placed in a sharps container, or hard plastic or metal container with screw on or tightly secured lid (e.g., plastic laundry detergent container). Mark the container-"Used Syringes and Lancets". Discard in household trash.

Unwrap medication contained in skin patches discard separately in household trash.

Empty prescription medication powders into household trash. Empty containers should then be placed in the household trash.

Liquid medication (including eye drops) should be poured or squeezed from container. Dispose of empty container in household trash.

Controlled substances should be returned to the prescribing physician or pharmacist. Federal law regarding controlled substances such as narcotics states, "no person shall be in control of (i.e., possess) a controlled substance (i.e., drug) unless they are properly registered by the Federal Government (e.g., pharmacists, physicians) or are the recipient of a prescribed drug (i.e., a patient)."

All unused or expired medications should be safely disposed of when no longer needed. NEVER TAKE ANY MEDICATION PRESCRIBED FOR SOMEONE ELSE. Medications should be stored out of reach of children. A comprehensive list of items and how you can dispose of them can be found on Wyckoff on the Web ([www.wyckoff-nj.com](http://www.wyckoff-nj.com)) under Departments then Board of Health at: [www.wyckoff-nj.com](http://www.wyckoff-nj.com).