

Prescription Drug Roundup

What: Safe disposal of unused and expired prescription drugs

When: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. May 8

Where: Save-Mart locations in Carson City
Senior Centers in Lyon County



Why are you collecting unused prescription drugs?

Medicine left over from a doctor's prescription can be abused or misused. Abuse of some prescription drugs has become a real problem in our community, and this is one way to reduce the total supply. It can also be hazardous for you to use leftover drugs for something other than for the illness your doctor prescribed them in the first place. Bring the drugs to one of the roundup locations, and they will be destroyed by the Sheriff's Office.

Can't I donate unused drugs to some organization that could use them?

No, not if they're a controlled substance. And even if they're over-the-counter drugs, it can be a problem because the drugs might be mislabeled or out-of-date. It's better to dispose of them safely.

Is it OK to flush old drugs down the toilet?

Please don't. Medications flushed into the sewer or septic system may eventually get into the water supply. That's another big reason for rounding them up this way, because we want to protect our drinking water. Not all municipal water treatment systems are able to filter out all kinds of drugs. Water tests in several cities have showed traces of prescription drugs.

I can't make it to the drug roundup, so how do I dispose of my unused medicines?

Anything you think may be dangerous can be taken to the Sheriff's Office and handed to a deputy. Otherwise, you may safely dispose of unused or expired prescription drugs by taking them out of their original containers, mixing them with some undesirable substance (like kitty litter or coffee grounds), sealing them in a bag or an old margarine tub, then placing them in your trash.

These pills are expensive. Aren't I just throwing away money?

You're right. They are expensive. One thing you can do is ask your doctor to prescribe only as many pills as you need. It's better to check with your doctor and refill a prescription than to buy too many in the first place. And because prescription drugs are expensive, they're lucrative on the black market. Too many "extra" pills wind up in the hands of drug abusers.

How can I make sure my medicines don't get stolen?

It's awful to think that somebody who has access to your medicine cabinet may be swiping your pills, but it happens. Lock them up. A "medicine safe" may be purchased for as little as \$20, or a locking wall-mounted cabinet costs around \$200. They'll not only deter thieves but give you peace of mind that children won't accidentally get their hands on potentially dangerous medications.