

MEDICATION DISPOSAL OPTIONS (explanation)

Spring cleaning? Wondering what to do with those old, expired medications you or someone elderly you know may want to get rid of?

Maybe you have recently heard that flushing medications is no longer acceptable due to environmental concerns, and putting them in the garbage is also discouraged.

A pilot program, which ME DEP is part of, will be placing a limited number of postage-paid mailers at various Maine pharmacies starting May 12th. Information is attached. This pilot will ultimately distribute 9000 mailers around the state, but for the first few months there will be limited locations. This first stage is aimed at reaching those 65 years or older. During a second phase the mailers will be available to anyone. Participants will be asked to fill out a survey and call an 800 number when mailing the meds. The pharmacists will be handing out the mailers upon request.

Because I know someone will ask, the medications will be mailed to the Maine Drug Enforcement Agency, separated in to two categories: controlled (narcotics) and non-controlled (non-narcotic prescription and over-the-counter). The non-controlled will go to hazardous waste incineration and the controlled will be incinerated in-state as solid waste.

Once the 'bugs' are worked out of the system, it is hoped that this will become a permanent program open to all. As usual, funding is the major obstacle. But for now, this opportunity is out there, so I thought I would let you know.

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