

Safe drug disposal

What to do with unwanted prescription and over-the-counter medications

In 2011, the Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics launched “Safe Trips for Scripts,” a program intended to combat prescription drug abuse.

Since then, 178 drug disposal sites have been established in Oklahoma. Designed like a mailbox, these containers allow people to anonymously discard their leftover or out-of-date prescription drugs. OBN’s Mark Woodward says over 120,000 pounds of drugs have been collected through this program.

According to OK Policy, Oklahomans misuse and abuse painkillers at a level 232 percent higher than the national average. This epidemic, measured in terms of unintentional poisonings, costs Oklahoma over \$40 million annually.

Disposing of unnecessary medications can prevent accidental overdoses, keep children from ingesting them and lessen the chance they will be stolen and sold on the street, according to OK Policy.

Instructions for proper drug disposal:

- Never flush drugs down the toilet or sink. Most wastewater treatment plants are not equipped to filter out medications, which means those chemicals find their way into local rivers and waterways. Drinking water in several locations across the U.S. has been contaminated with low levels of antibiotics, hormones and anti-seizure meds, likely due to improperly disposed medications.
- To ensure anonymity, pour the medication into an unmarked, sealable plastic bag, drop the bag at a disposal site and discard the medication bottles in your own trash after marking over any sensitive information with a black marker.
- Disposal sites are only for prescription drugs; do not deposit needles, inhalers, syringes, liquids or illegal drugs.
- As an alternative option for prescription drug disposal, Walgreens pharmacy chain announced in February that it will add safe medication disposal kiosks in 500 stores across the country. Several stores in Oklahoma already have the kiosks, which are available during regular pharmacy hours.

Disposal sites can be accessed inside the following locations:

Broken Arrow Police Department

Public Safety Complex
1101 N. 6th Street
Broken Arrow, OK 74012

Tulsa Police Gilcrease Division

3436 N. Delaware Ave.

8 a.m.-6 p.m., Monday-Friday

Tulsa Police Mingo Valley Division

10122 E. 11th St.

8 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday

Tulsa Police Riverside Division

7515 S. Riverside Drive

8 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday

Tulsa County Sheriff's Office, Faulkner Building

303 W. First St.

8 a.m.-4:15 p.m., Monday-Friday

Tulsa Walgreens:

7111 S. Lewis Ave.

11332 E. 31st St.

1714 Utica Square

These stores are open 24 hours per day.