

## **HOW TO GET RID OF THOSE OLD DRUGS**

Have you ever wondered how to get rid of all of those old pills, potions, and other medications that are old and out of date? Well most people will tell you to dump it in the eternal problem solver, the toilet. This is a wrong answer because we are contaminating our water and soil with different drugs that do not belong in the in the environment. Some examples of this are antibiotics, antidepressants, hormones, epilepsy medication, heart medication, and many others. Where does this come from, sewage waste, pouring drugs down a toilet, animal medication waste, and drugs thrown away in the landfills. So what can we do as responsible human beings?

1. Do not flush prescription drugs down the toilet or drain unless the label or accompanying patient information specifically instructs you to do so.
2. Dispose of prescription drugs not labeled to be flushed; you may be able to take advantage of community drug take-back programs or other programs, such as household hazardous waste collection events, that collect drugs at a central location for proper disposal. Call your city or county Solid Waste Department to find out if a drug take-back program is available.
3. If a drug takes –back or collection program is not available:
  - Take your prescription drugs out of their original container.
  - Mix drugs with an undesirable substance, such as used cat litter or used coffee grounds.
  - Put the mixture into a disposable container with a lid, such as an empty margarine tub, or into a sealable bag.
  - Conceal or remove any personal information, including Rx number, on the empty containers by covering it with black permanent marker or duct tape, or by scratching it off.

The information in this article comes from the Office of National Drug Control Policy and was published in 2009.