



WESTPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Foti Koskinas
Chief of Police

Westport Police to Participate in National Prescription Drug Take Back Initiative

[Westport, CT] – On Saturday, April 27, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. the Westport Police Department and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration will give the public its 17th opportunity in nine years to prevent pill abuse and theft by ridding their homes of potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs. Bring your pills for disposal to the Westport-Weston Health District located at 180 Bayberry Lane. Please note, we cannot accept liquids or needles/sharps, only pills or patches. The service is free and anonymous, no questions asked.

Last fall Americans turned in nearly 460 tons (more than 900,000 pounds) of prescription drugs at more than 5,800 sites operated by the DEA and almost 4,800 of its state and local law enforcement partners. Overall, in its 16 previous Take Back events, DEA and its partners have taken in almost 11 million pounds—nearly 5,500 tons—of pills.

This initiative addresses a vital public safety and public health issue. Medicines that languish in home cabinets are highly susceptible to diversion, misuse, and abuse. Rates of prescription drug abuse in the U.S. are alarmingly high, as are the number of accidental poisonings and overdoses due to these drugs. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Survey on Drug Use and Health shows year after year that the majority of misused and abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including someone else's medication being stolen from the home medicine cabinet. In addition, Americans are now advised that their usual methods for disposing of unused medicines—flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the trash—both pose potential safety and health hazards.

Residents are also reminded that a year-round collection bin is located in the lobby police headquarters, so drugs can be properly disposed of at any time rather than waiting for designated collection dates. We also have a supply of medication disposal bags in our lobby, which can be used for proper disposal of liquid and pill form medications. The bags have been provided as part of a grant that Positive Directions received and are intended to assist in the proper disposal of prescription medications. They contain activated charcoal, so the medications can be placed in the bags, mixed with water, and then safely disposed of in the regular garbage per the instructions.

For more information about the disposal of prescription drugs or about the April 27 Take Back Day event, go to www.DEATakeBack.com.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 04.15.2019

Lieutenant Jillian Cabana

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