

# Guidelines for Proper Disposal of Household Medication



## New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

Over the counter and prescription medications should not be disposed down the drain because wastewater treatment facilities are not designed to remove pharmaceutical compounds and they may end

up in your local waterways, and may eventually be found in drinking water. Properly disposing of unwanted and expired prescriptions and over-the-counter medications in the trash promotes a healthy aquatic environment and prevents accidental poisoning and intentional abuse.

### 4 STEPS FOR PROPER DISPOSAL

1. **Keep medicine in original container. Mark out personal information on prescription bottles.**
2. **Mix liquid medicine with undesirable substances like coffee grinds, cat litter, or dirt. Dilute pills with water, then add coffee grinds, cat litter, or dirt.**
3. **Place bottles in an opaque container, like a yogurt container, and secure lid; or wrap in a dark colored plastic bag,.**
4. **Hide the container in the trash. Do NOT recycle.**

Improper disposal in your trash allows others to divert the substance and consume medication that was not prescribed to them.

Step 1   Step 2   Step 3   Step 4



**Mark out personal information**



**Mix with water and coffee grinds, cat litter, or dirt**



**Place in opaque container**



**Hide in the trash**

**Do NOT dispose  
of medication  
down the drain or  
toilet.**

***Prevent water pollution, Promote  
a healthy environment, Properly  
dispose of your unneeded and  
expired medication.***

**Do NOT keep  
excess or expired  
medication  
around the home.**

**For More Information Contact: For proper disposal of household sharps visit:**  
DEP Solid & Hazardous Waste Program <http://www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/phss/syringe.pdf>  
(609) 633-1418

**Or call 609-984-6620**