

PUBLIC OUTREACH- BERNARDS TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL
ALLIANCE

(Following page)



BERNARDS TOWNSHIP HEALTH DEPARTMENT
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE AND BERNARDS TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT TO SPONSOR SECOND ANNUAL MEDICINE DROP OFF DRIVE THRU

Basking Ridge, NJ (February 13, 2015) -- The Bernards Township Municipal Alliance Against Substance Abuse and Bernards Township Police Department are holding the Township's second annual Medicine Drop Off Drive Thru on Saturday, March 28th from 10:00 am until 12:00 noon.

"We're so excited to be hosting this event again. It's great to give people an opportunity to drop off any unused prescription or over the counter medication. They don't even have to get out of their cars! Just drive up to the police station, hand a Municipal Alliance member your unused medications, and drive away. The medication will then be safely and anonymously disposed of. It couldn't be more convenient", says Community Program Coordinator and Municipal Alliance Grant Coordinator, Kaitlin Kordusky.

Oftentimes when people are prescribed medications by their doctors, they pick up the medications, use them until they feel well, and then unused medicine sits in the bathroom drawer or medicine cabinet for long periods of time. While the medicine sitting locked up isn't harmful by itself, the possibility of what can happen when prescription medication gets into the wrong hands can lead to harmful outcomes. Either someone else finds the medication and uses it in the way it was not intended, or people try to dispose of the medications improperly.

According to Somerset County Sheriff Frank J. Provenzano, “Leftover medicines pose serious safety and health threats and also raise environmental concerns. Prescription-drug abuse is the fastest-growing drug problem in the United States. Among youth, seven of the top 10 abused substances are pharmaceuticals. Additionally, medicines flushed down the drain or toilet can contaminate bodies of water, harm wildlife and end up in drinking-water supplies.”

Medications should be dropped off in their original packages or bottles. Participants should black out names on all prescription packages or bottles. These medications can be unused, expired, over the counter, or prescription. Only solid medications, pills, patches, inhalers or similar objects can be accepted. Liquids, medical waste, oxygen tanks, needles, and syringes cannot be accepted. Participants are welcome to put multiple medication bottles or boxes into a bag or hand them over individually. Additional info can be found at <http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/meddrop> .

Signs will be posted at 1 Collyer Lane on the day of the Drive Thru. Participants should follow the signs to the Police Department where Municipal Alliance members will be standing. Please note that the Drop Off Box that is located at the Bernards Township Police Department is always open for drop off Monday – Friday from 6:30am until 8:30 pm. To drop off at other times, please call the Bernards Township non-emergency line at (908) 766-1122.

The mission of the Bernards Township Municipal Alliance Against Substance Abuse is to provide consultation, programs, training and resources to members of the Bernards Township community with the goal of preventing and reducing the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs through education, support of events and programs and presence in the community. For more information, visit www.bernardsalliance.org.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE AND BERNARDS TOWNSHIP POLICE
DEPARTMENT COLLECT MEDICINE AT DROP OFF DRIVE
THRU**

Basking Ridge, NJ (April 6, 2015) -- The Bernards Township Municipal Alliance Against Substance Abuse and Bernards Township Police Department hosted the Township's second annual Medicine Drop Off Drive Thru on Saturday, March 28th from 10:00 am until 12:00 noon. This drive thru drop off was held in response to the recent "pills to heroin" epidemic that's been gripping New Jersey, including Bernards Township.

During the two hour time frame, Health Officer Lucy Forgione, and Municipal Alliance members Cathy Phillips and Kaitlin Kordusky greeted over 60 vehicles and picked up unused medication curbside. All community members that dropped off medications were given information on upcoming Municipal Alliance programs, including "Out of the Mouth of... Teens!" an evening program to be held at the Warren Craft Meeting Room at Bernards Town Hall on Thursday, April 9th at 7:00 pm. The program will include perspectives from local teenagers on the issues of drugs and alcohol in Bernards Township.

One of those problems includes illicit prescription medication use. More times than not, people are prescribed medications by their doctors, they pick up the medications, use them until they feel well, and then unused medicine sits in the bathroom drawer or medicine cabinet for long periods of time. Sometimes they are simply prescribed too much medication. Medicine sitting locked up isn't harmful by itself, but the possibility of what

can happen when prescription medication gets into the wrong hands can lead to harmful outcomes. Either someone else finds the medication and uses it in the way it was not intended, or people try to dispose of the medications improperly. This poses not only serious threats to the environment, groundwater, and animals in the community, but also to both children and adults who may become addicted to the medications and use them for getting high. Prescription pills produce a high very similar to that of heroin, and when prescription pills become too expensive or hard to get, individuals may turn to heroin to satisfy their craving. By disposing of medications properly, community members can help combat against pill addiction.

The permanent drug drop box was installed in the Bernards Township Police Department lobby in June of 2013. The box expanded the Township's participation in the yearly "National Drug Take-Back Day" to collecting year round during police lobby hours. The Bernards Township Municipal Alliance joined forces with them in January of 2014 to host the First Annual Medication Drop Drive Thru. By allowing resident's to pull up and drop off their medications without leaving their car proved effective as the Alliance collected 96 pounds of medication. This year was even more successful. During the same 2 hour block the Alliance collected 198 pounds of unused medications from members of the Bernards Township community.

The Municipal Alliance would like to remind residents that the drop box is always open Monday – Friday from 7:00 am until 4:30 pm for disposal. Medications can be unused, expired, over the counter, or prescription. Only solid medications, pills, patches, inhalers or similar objects can be accepted. Liquids, medical waste, oxygen tanks, needles, and syringes cannot be accepted. Medication can be in the original bottles with the names blocked out or poured into another sealable bag. Additional info and information on how to dispose of other substances can be found at <http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/meddrop>.

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