



Department of Health & Social Services
Alaska State Troopers
Alaska Safe Medicine Alliance

PRESS RELEASE

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Statewide free safe medication disposal event happening Saturday

Unsafe medication storage, disposal linked to drug abuse, accidents, water contamination

ANCHORAGE — Alaskans are invited to drop off medications for free, safe disposal Saturday, Sept. 29, at locations statewide. Local police and Alaska State Troopers will supervise the sites.

Alaska's safe disposal event is part of a nationwide event coordinated by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. The public event seeks to prevent pill abuse, theft and accidental poisonings, as well as environmental damage to our waterways.

Left-over medications in our homes contribute to potentially fatal recreational or accidental misuse and child poisonings. In 2011, painkillers were the second leading cause of accidental poisoning in Alaska children under age 6.

The DEA-partnered events started in Alaska in 2009, and now are held spring and fall. Alaskans turned in 2,722 pounds of prescription medication at the last event in April.

WHAT: The public is invited to drop off old or unwanted prescriptions, including pet medications, for free, safe disposal.

WHEN: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 29, 2012

WHERE: 34 locations statewide. To find the nearest site, follow the "Got drugs?" link at www.dea.gov.

WHY:

- Prevent accidental poisonings, prescription drug abuse and related crime
- Protect drinking water and aquatic ecosystems from unsafe disposal, such as flushing old medications, which releases potent chemicals in our waterways.

WHO: Sponsors are the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, the Alaska State Troopers and the Alaska Safe Medicine Alliance. For details, visit www.dea.gov.

Capt. Anthony April is an Alaska State Trooper based in Ketchikan.

Randi Sweet is community action director for United Way of Anchorage.

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