

Event to collect old, unused drugs

By Liv Osby

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Tossing old medicines down the drain can harm the environment, so local organizers will hold another drive-through event Saturday to collect the unused drugs and dispose of them properly.

"Many of us have been taught to dispose of unwanted medications by flushing them down the toilet, sending them right into our waterways. But even trace amounts of drugs can disrupt the balance of life in our lakes, rivers and streams," said Nancy Fitzer, education director at Upstate Forever, an event sponsor.

"Scientific studies have found that even extremely diluted concentrations of pharmaceutical residues can cause harm to fish, frogs, crus-

taceans and other aquatic species," Fitzer said.

Collection sites will take any unwanted or expired household prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, vitamins, supplements and veterinary medications. The name of the drug should be visible on labels but personal information should be blacked out with a permanent marker.

No sharps or syringes will be accepted.

"As a primary care physician ... I am proud to support this community initiative and excited to join other physicians, pharmacists and volunteers in their efforts to protect our community and our local environment from the dangers of improper handling and disposal of medications," said Dr. Stefanie M. Putnam, a primary care physician with Heritage Pedi-

atric and Internal Medicine in Simpsonville.

The ninth "Project Rx: A River Remedy" will take place from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at McAlister Square, 225 S. Pleasantburg Drive; St. Francis Millennium, 2 Innovation Drive; and Greenville County Medical Society, 1395 S. Church St.

Other Project Rx task force members include Bon Secours St. Francis Health System, Carolinas Institute for Community Policing, the Greenville County Medical Society, the Greenville County

Sheriff's Office, Greenville Family Partnership, Greenville Technical College, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and Renewable Water Resources.

Supporting organizations include *The Greenville News*, the Greenville Journal, Greenville Water, Martin Printing, Presbyterian College, Keep Greenville County Beautiful, the Powdersville Water District, the city of Greenville and Whole Foods Market.

For more information, visit ariverremedy.org.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2014 THE GREENVILLE NEWS