

Project Rx provides proper disposal options

ASHLEY RHINEHART AND STACEY FLAX 12:11 a.m. EDT September 12, 2015



Project Rx: A River Remedy is a community-wide initiative that was launched in 2010 to raise awareness on the importance of proper medication disposal. Many households are contributing to the pollution of our water and communities and may not realize it. The pollutants include over-the-counter and prescription medications such as your common pain or allergy medicine!

Studies have found that pharmaceuticals are present in our nation's waterways and further research suggests that certain drugs may cause ecological harm. How did these medications make their way into our waterways? In most cases, we put them there.

Pouring and flushing expired or unwanted medication down the sink and toilet is unfortunately a common occurrence in America, and it is our goal to educate the local community on the unintended impacts of improper medication disposal. We also provide a free, safe and environmentally-friendly option for the community to

discard their medications. In the 1970s, the Environmental Protection Agency stopped encouraging flushing unwanted medications due to the concern of how it was affecting our water supply long-term. Yet, 40 years later, many of us continue to dispose of medicines this way — hence the educational need for Project Rx. Another concern is that medications not disposed of properly can make their way into the wrong hands.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, medicines are the most common poison exposure category in the U.S. Unfortunately, when medicines are not stored or discarded properly, there can be dire consequences to our environment and our loved ones.

Many hands play a role in making Project Rx a reality. Our partners each come to the table supporting a different cause — be it environmental protection, pharmaceutical education or drug abuse prevention — and collaborate for a common goal: to keep our community safe and healthy.

Since 2010, Project Rx has held nine events in our area and collected approximately 10,866 pounds of medication. Come out on Saturday, Sept. 19, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to McAlister Square, St. Francis Millennium Campus, as well as multiple Greenville Health System locations to properly dispose of your medications.

Additionally, this year we are proud to announce that we have expanded our Project Rx take-back locations into Laurens and Oconee Counties. These new partnerships have opened the door for us to serve even more Upstate residents who contribute to the quality of our waterways.

To view a full list of locations and addresses, visit www.ariverremedy.org. It's quick. It's easy. And it's important for our environment. If you are not able to attend the event, you can utilize the permanent drop box at the Greenville County Law Enforcement Center located at 4 McGee Street.

While many of us are aware of the simple steps we can take to help our environment, we don't always take the time to proactively work towards environmental health. Awareness campaigns, such as Project Rx and others sponsored by Renewable Water Resources, remind us to dedicate some time to think about our daily environmental impact, and take concrete action steps to help lessen our footprint.

We challenge you to take a few minutes and go through your medicine cabinets to see if you have any unused or expired medications that need to be properly disposed of. Remember, we can all do our part to keep our communities, rivers, lakes and streams safe and clean. And, by the way, that bottle of antibiotics that expired in 2002 has got to go!

Ashley Rhinehart is public relations coordinator for Renewable Water Resources. Stacey Flax is customer service/ contract manager for Renewable Water Resources.

Read or Share this story: <http://grnol.co/1UN33VT>