



# **Madison County collection of expired prescription drugs program grows, likely saves lives**

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**EDWARDSVILLE** - A recent expired prescription drug collection effort in Madison County once again netted an abundance of items that would have otherwise been tossed down the drain or left for others to reuse.

**Madison County Sheriff John Lakin** led the effort with the cooperation of other area police departments. **Edwardsville and Glen Carbon Police** once again shared extensively in the role of getting the word out about the collection and ultimately proper disposal.

Periodically, Madison County Deputy Sheriffs transport the collected drugs to approved U.S. Environmental Protection Agency locations where they are incinerated.

Because of the location of the medication collection bins in police department lobbies, the public can dispose of prescription medications every day of the year. Lakin said the large outreach for expired prescription drug collection will be done quarterly.

“We obviously want to keep the non-used prescription medication out of the reach of youth,” Lakin said. “The other misconception over the years was to put the pills in the toilet and flush. Many don’t know that the unused medication contaminates the water system. That is something we are trying to avoid.

“So many don’t take all of an antibiotic or pain medication and it is left in the cabinet,” he said. “Often then there is no where to go with it. We can offer another option of where to take that and dispose of it properly.”

Among the medications which can be deposited at the bins are antibiotics, hormones, blood pressure regulators, painkillers, steroids, any over-the-counter medications, anti-



depressants, seda

tives, cough syrups and other controlled substances.

Medications which should not be disposed of at the bins include sharps/needles, mercury thermometers, IV solutions, hearing aids, oxygen tanks, x-rays or other household waste items.

For specific questions, residents should contact the sheriff's department or local participating police department.

Lakin said previously: "Unused prescription drugs can be accidentally ingested, stolen, misused and abused. The number of people who abuse prescription drugs, especially painkillers such as hydrocodone and oxycodone, far exceed the number of those using heroin, cocaine and other drugs."

Lakin said the recent push netted more than 2,500 pounds of unused and expired prescription medications. The medications were taken to a disposal unit in Indiana.

"Agencies in our area are doing a good job of accepting the medications with containers that are permanent fixtures in their buildings," he said.

EdGlenToday.com and RiverBender.com will announce the next targeted collection dates when they are released later in the year.