

Responsible Medication Disposal

Medications keep us healthy. However, for various reasons, some medications are not fully taken, resulting in a quantity that requires disposal. Often, we are faced with a disposal dilemma. Should we simply flush our unwanted medications down the toilet? If flushed, medications leach into our waters, including our fresh water aquifers - Long Island's only source of drinking water. In 2012, Suffolk County Water Authority closed one of its municipal wells because it was contaminated with 5 medications (Carbamazepine for bipolar disease; Meprobamate for anxiety; Gemfibrozil for cholesterol; Naproxen for pain; Ibuprofen for pain and inflammation). They also detected Dilantin, an anti-seizure medication used to treat epilepsy.



Pharmaceutical Collection Receptacle - "Big Red Box"

To protect our drinking water from medication contamination and to help solve the medication disposal dilemma, The Lloyd Magothy Water Trust (named for the Lloyd aquifer and Magothy aquifer) designed a pharmaceutical collection receptacle (dubbed the Big Red Box) that can be placed in retail pharmacies. The Big Red Box meets the specifications of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and will give people a free, convenient and responsible method to dispose of their unwanted medications. View a 6 minute video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0khFQXszMs>

Inside the Big Red Box is a special bag called an "inner liner." When full, the inner liner is removed from the Big Red Box by the pharmacist, sealed, and then sent to a reverse distributor. Reverse distributors are companies registered with the DEA (a federal agency within the United States Department of Justice). The reverse distributor causes the destruction of the collected medication by conducting a "witness burn" at an incineration facility approved by all federal and state regulatory agencies.



- FACT: Each year, 1.2 million emergency room visits are attributable to prescription drug mis-use.
 - FACT: Each year, 71,000 children are seen in emergency rooms because they accidentally ingested medications.
 - FACT: Each year, approximately 4 billion prescriptions are written.
 - FACT: Each year, approximately 250 million pounds of medication are improperly disposed.
- That's enough unwanted medication to fill 6,250 tractor trailers.



Cause of death	Deaths per year	Deaths per day
traffic accidents	32,000	88
illegal drug over-dose	16,000	40
prescription drug over-dose	20,000	60

The Lloyd Magothy Water Trust has a dual mission.

ENVIRONMENTAL:

We strive to keep medications out of our drinking water, ponds, rivers, streams and coastal waters.

SOCIETAL:

We strive to prevent prescription drug abuse and accidental poisonings by keeping medications out of the hands of those individuals, particularly teens, who might seek to divert medications for non-medical purposes.

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You can find out more about **Operation Big Red Box** and how you can support this project by contacting Thomas McAbee, Executive Director of the Lloyd Magothy Water Trust (a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation) at 631-353-3435 or email tommcabee@gmail.com