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Media Contact: Jeff Hegedus, Environmental Health Supervisor
Phone: (360) 778-6044
E-mail address: jhegedus@whatcomcounty.us

Prevent Opioid Misuse – Return Unused Meds at Two Take-Back Events

BELLINGHAM, WA — Two upcoming drug take-back events will give Whatcom County residents the opportunity to empty their medicine cabinets of leftover or unwanted medications that can pose a risk of poisoning or misuse. Events are scheduled for 10:00am – 1:00pm on Saturday, August 24 in Maple Falls and Sunday, August 25 in Birch Bay.

The two communities were selected for take-back events because they are areas of population density but lack permanent Whatcom Med Return drop-off locations.

Disposing of medications at the take-back events is as quick and easy as driving up and dropping medications in the bins provided, without the need to answer questions or provide further information. Bins are monitored by law enforcement officers, as required by Drug Enforcement Agency rules that govern secure medicine return programs.

Almost all types of medications are accepted at the take-back events, including prescription medications, over the counter medication, cough syrup and other liquid medications, nasal sprays, inhalers, and medicinal ointments or creams. Illicit substances and sharps, such as needles, are not accepted. Additionally, vitamins, supplements, herbal remedies, cosmetics or personal care products, and pet pesticide products are also not accepted. Medications can be returned in their original containers, with any personal information removed or blacked out if desired. They can also be removed from original packaging and returned in a plastic bag or other container.

The take-back events are part of [Whatcom Med Return](#), Whatcom County's secure medicine return program that was expanded in 2019. The program includes [permanent drop-off locations](#) at clinics, pharmacies, and law enforcement agencies throughout the county. It also includes a mail-back option for people who cannot reach one of the drop-off locations, as well as a requirement for regular take-back events in Birch Bay and Maple Falls.

Disposing of old, unwanted or expired medication is an important part of a multi-pronged effort to reduce opioid misuse. Prescription drugs are often cited as a source of drug misuse, and they can be stolen from home medicine cabinets if not stored in a locked container. Getting rid of unused medications through secure medicine return programs also keeps them out of the waste stream, where they can harm the environment.

Whatcom Med Return is a program operated by [MED-Project](#) with oversight by the Whatcom County Health Department.

Event Details

Saturday, August 24, 10:00am – 1:00pm
East Whatcom Regional Resource Center
8251 Kendall Road, Maple Falls

Sunday, August 25, 10:00am – 1:00pm
Birch Bay Fire Hall (North Whatcom Fire & Rescue Station 63)
4581 Birch Bay Lynden Road, Blaine

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