

Author of Pharmaceutical Stewardship Act Encourages Residents to Drop off Pharmaceuticals at One of 15 Area Collection Sites

Rochester, NY –Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28) today encouraged Western New Yorkers to safely and securely dispose of expired prescription drugs at any of 15 Rochester-area participating locations on Saturday April 28, National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day.

Between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on April 28, Western New Yorkers will be able to properly dispose of expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs at local collection sites free of charge. Local representatives will then safely dispose of them, ensuring that they will not pose a threat to public health. [To see a list of participating locations, click here](#) .

“It’s so important that we dispose of our pharmaceuticals in a safe way,” said Slaughter. “Prescription drug abuse is on the rise and the improper disposal of prescriptions threatens our environment and drinking water. Participating in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day is a great way to combat these problems and I encourage everyone to bring unused or expired drugs to a participating location. Doing so will help reduce drug abuse, theft, and the contamination of our local water supply.”

Recent statistics issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicate that in 2010, enough prescription painkillers were prescribed to medicate every American adult for an entire month. Deaths from prescription drug overdoses now kill more people every year than traffic accidents.

This is the Drug Enforcement Administration’s (DEA) fourth National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day. Americans that participated in the last National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day on October 29, 2011, turned in more than 377,086 pounds (188.5 tons) of unwanted or expired medications for safe and proper disposal at the 5,327 take-back sites that were available in all 50 states and U.S. territories.

The Risks of Improper Disposal

Contaminating The Local Water Supply: The improper disposal of unwanted prescriptions dumped into our nation’s waterways is contaminating water supplies. In 2002, the United States Geological Survey found that 80 percent of streams and 93 percent of groundwater was contaminated with at least one pharmaceutical. In 2008, an investigation found that at least 46 million Americans are exposed to prescription drugs through their drinking water.

Temptation for Abuse: Prescription drugs that languish in home medicine cabinets are highly susceptible to diversion, misuse, and abuse, creating a public health crisis. The rate of prescription drug abuse in the U.S. today is at an alarmingly high level—two-and-a-half times

more people currently abuse prescription drugs than the number of those using cocaine, heroin, hallucinogens, and inhalants combined, according to [a 2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health \(NSDUH\)](#). The same study shows that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including from the home medicine cabinet.

Slaughter's Leadership

Slaughter has introduced H.R. 2939, the Pharmaceutical Stewardship Act, legislation that would provide Americans with a convenient way to safely dispose of their pharmaceuticals and ensure that they are kept out of drinking water and the hands of unsuspecting children or criminals. In particular it would set up a nonprofit corporation, financed by pharmaceutical producers, which would be responsible for establishing comprehensive drug take-back programs in every state. The bill would also set up a commission to develop a strategy to prevent pharmaceutical contaminants from polluting our waterways and environments from production to disposal.

[For more on the Pharmaceutical Stewardship Act, click here](#) .

[For a complete list of participants in Western New York Drug Take Back Day please click here.](#)