

## **Cook County to Host Medication Take-Back Program in Orland Park**

The Village of Orland Park Clerk's Office is teaming up with the Cook County Department of Environmental Control to help residents dispose of unwanted prescriptions and simultaneously help the environment.

Each year, more than 4600 tons of pharmaceuticals and personal care products enter the waste stream. Medicine can be a safety hazard if not properly disposed. Along with polluting local water sources, improperly disposed medicines can lead to accidental consumption or overdose by humans and animals and put unwanted and potentially dangerous substances into landfills.

"Our Office of Special Services has joined forces with Cook County's Department of Environmental Control to give residents an option for disposing of medications that are no longer needed," said Orland Park Village Clerk David Maher.

Cook County will hold its Medication Take-Back Program on Saturday, May 23, 2009 from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Cook County Highway Maintenance Yard at 135<sup>th</sup> Street and 89<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Orland Park.

The Environmental Protection Agency has asked consumers to stop flushing unwanted medications down the drain and the federal government has recommended the use of pharmaceutical take-back programs to dispose of unwanted medications.

"Cook County's Medication Take Back Program is a great way for residents to clear their medicine cabinets of expired, unwanted and oftentimes dangerous medications," Maher said. "And, at the same time, you're helping the environment by not flushing these medicines down the toilet," he added.

Medications accepted on May 23 include prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, medicated ointments, medicated shampoos, liquids containing medications, prescription inhalers, over-the-counter inhalers, glass thermometers, sharps and needles and medical devices containing mercury.

Only medications from private households will be accepted. Before bringing medicines to the drop off, residents should use a permanent black marker to black out the patient's name and all personal information on the prescription label.

Items not accepted include DEA controlled substances, including narcotic medications and illegal drugs, biohazardous materials, radioactive materials and other household wastes.

"All medications received at the drop off will be destroyed in an environmentally responsible manner," Maher said.

For more information, contact the Cook County Department of Environmental Control at 312/603-8217.