

Unwanted Medications? **CRUSH IT, DON'T FLUSH IT!**



- 1** Pour medication into a sealable plastic bag and crush. Add a little water to dissolve.
- 2** Add coffee grounds or a similar material that will render the medication unrecognizable.
- 3** Seal the plastic bag and put it in the trash.
- 4** Remove and destroy information labels from all containers before recycling them.

Patients should ALWAYS refer to printed material accompanying their medication for specific instructions.

Turn Over for Details



Barnstable County
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS PROGRAM
Collaborating with University of Massachusetts Cooperative Extension

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THE PROBLEM WITH FLUSHING MEDICATIONS

"Medications that are flushed down the toilet can and do find their way into our nation's waterways every day. Those drugs are present in water that supports many species of fish and other wildlife."

- H. Dale Hall, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



What do we know about the impacts of medications found in water on fish and wildlife?

Many pharmaceuticals and their by-products have been detected in waters. Researchers are currently examining the potential effects of these compounds on fish and wildlife.

***Why can't I just dump pills into my kitchen trash can?
Do I really need to go through all those steps?***

When pills are thrown directly into the trash, it can lead to unintended exposure to people or animals. People may go through the trash to obtain unused medications or personal information found on discarded prescription bottles. The extra steps provide a safer method for disposing of unused medications.

Why doesn't Barnstable County collect these medications at an official place or time?

Due to Federal and State law, collections are costly and complex to arrange and require an on-duty police officer and pharmacist to be on site.

