

# SIUE Police and School of Pharmacy partner to take back prescription drugs

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EDWARDSVILLE - The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Police Department and School of Pharmacy (SOP) are helping rid households of dangerous prescription drugs by hosting a drug takeback program for the community. The two are hosting a pharmaceutical drop off site during Edwardsville's Goshen Market on various dates this summer. The takeback program will be available at the market on Saturday, Aug. 12.

Community members are encouraged to dispose of their prescription medications, over the counter medications, vitamins and veterinary medications at this safe disposal site.

"We are happy to be part of the Goshen Market and provide an extremely important service to the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon community," said SIUE Police Chief Kevin Schmoll. "Prescription drugs are the number one abused controlled substance in our country today. They often lead to more serious drug abuse, such as heroin or crystal meth, after the prescription medication runs out."

"The opioid epidemic in our country has hit an all-time record for addiction and deaths," he added. "This program allows for proper disposal and gets prescription drugs out of the hands of the people who may abuse them."

According to Chris Lynch, PharmD, professor and director of clinical programs in the SIUE SOP, a report from the National Institute on Drug Abuse showed that more than 30 percent of those who abuse prescription drugs are teens who access the medications from their parents or grandparents.

“Prescription medications left in the house can also pose a significant threat of accidental poisoning for younger children,” Lynch said. “People should keep them under lock and key, and turn them into law enforcement when they are no longer needed.”

The takeback program provides a safe alternative to disposing approved medications, thereby keeping the medications out of children’s hands, landfills and water supplies.

“There is evidence that the old-fashioned method of flushing unwanted medications down the toilet introduces unsafe levels of potentially dangerous chemicals into our water supply,” Lynch explained. “Prescription takeback programs destroy medications through high temperature incineration, which breaks down the chemicals so that they are not harmful to our water supply or the environment.”

The SIUE Police Department has a pharmaceutical disposal receptacle from Illinois American Water and the Drug Free Coalition of Madison County available to the public 24/7, 365 days a week. The drop box is located in the SIUE Police Department lobby, located at 99 Supporting Services Rd.

Items that will not be accepted are needles/sharps, mercury thermometers, biomedical waste, compressed gas containers, aerosol cans or medications from businesses, physicians’ offices or clinics.

“Almost every household has that box of unused prescription medications,” Lynch said. “Take the time to dig out that box and bring it to an approved drop-off location. Keep your family and community safe.”

Questions regarding the use of the pharmaceutical disposal drop box, can be directed to the SIUE Police Department at [618-650-3324](tel:618-650-3324).

**SIUE School of Pharmacy:** Today’s pharmacists improve patients’ lives through the medication and education they provide. Dedicated to developing a community of caring pharmacists, the SIUE School of Pharmacy curriculum is nationally recognized as a model that offers students a unique combination of classroom education, research, community service and patient care. The School of Pharmacy’s areas of excellence include a drug design and discovery core; pediatric practice; chronic pain research and

practice; and diabetes research and practice. As the only downstate Illinois pharmacy doctorate program, the SIUE School of Pharmacy is addressing the growing need for highly trained pharmacists in a rapidly growing field.