

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**National Prescription Drug Take Back Day Invites Communities to Properly Dispose of Unwanted and Expired Medications for Free**

Stockton, CA (October 24, 2023) – On Saturday, October 28, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., San Joaquin County Public Health Services and the San Joaquin County Opioid Safety Coalition will partner with local law enforcement and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to provide drop-off locations for expired and unwanted medications, vaping devices, and pet medications. This event provides a safe, anonymous, and environmentally friendly method of disposal to prevent the mishandling and/or illicit distribution of pharmaceuticals.

The public is invited to use any of the seven drop-off sites throughout the county, including:

- Code 3 Wear, 304 Lincoln Center, Stockton, 95207
- Stockton Unified School District, Dept. of Public Safety, 640 N. San Joaquin Street, Stockton, 95202
- Woodbridge Fire District, 400 E. Augusta St., Woodbridge, 95258
- Lodi Police Department, 215 W. Elm St., Lodi, 9524
- Young's Payless Market IGA, 18980 CA-88, Lockeford, 95237
- Lathrop Police Department, 940 River Island Parkway, Lathrop, 95330
- Tracy Police Department, 1000 Civic Center Drive, Tracy, 95376

This service is free of charge and will not require divulging any personal information. Please note that sites *cannot* accept needles or [sharps](#) materials. Information will be provided on where these materials can be safely disposed.

Additionally, the following should be considered:

- Pills may be brought loose and without packaging, in blister packs, or in their original prescription bottles.
- Liquid products, such as cough syrup, should remain sealed in the original container.
- Vaping devices and cartridges must have their lithium batteries removed.

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- Pet medications will also be accepted

This initiative addresses a vital public safety and public health issue. Rates of prescription drug abuse in the United States are alarmingly high, as are the number of accidental poisonings and overdoses. Current data reveal that most abused prescription drugs come from family and friends, specifically home medicine cabinets. To help prevent this, the timely disposal of unused or expired medications is essential. Prescription drugs can often end up in the wrong hands, fueling a national overdose epidemic that kills more Americans annually than car accidents, according to DEA statistics.

This past spring, more than 650,000 pounds of unused or expired medications were collected across all national collection sites during the April 2023 National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. This is the 25<sup>th</sup> nationwide collection event since its inception in 2010.

In addition to the DEA's bi-annual event, there are more than 11,000 authorized collection sites available nationally year-round. For more details, visit San Joaquin County's Medication and Sharps Disposal Program's website (<http://bit.ly/3YFXGr>), or the DEA's year-round collection site locator [here](#).

For more information about the disposal of prescription drugs, or about the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day event, go to <https://www.dea.gov/takebackday>.

For questions about local overdose prevention efforts, contact Rachel Zerbo, San Joaquin County Public Health Services Public Health Educator, at 209-468-2699 or [rzerbo@sjcphs.org](mailto:rzerbo@sjcphs.org). Also, visit the San Joaquin County Opioid Safety Coalition [here](#).

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