

## Drug Take-Back Program

This fact sheet answers questions about the Drug Take-Back Program. As of July 1, 2021, the Program offers Oregon residents a convenient, safe, and secure way to dispose of unwanted prescription and over-the-counter medicines, free of charge. The Program is funded by drug manufacturers and was established by [ORS 459A.200 to 459A.266](#). The program must provide convenient collection of unwanted prescription and OTC drugs in every county in Oregon and education and outreach on safe drug disposal.

### Why is a drug take-back program important?

Leftover or expired drugs can pose serious environmental and health risks. When left in a household, drugs can lead to accidental poisonings, addiction, or abuse. Drugs thrown in the garbage or flushed down the toilet can contaminate our rivers or groundwater.

### How does the Drug Take-Back Program work?

Program operators implement the Program with DEQ oversight. Program operators must make available the following services for disposal of unwanted drugs free of charge to Oregon residents:

- Drop-off sites where people can dispose of unwanted drugs in-person in a secure repository; and
- Prepaid envelopes for people to mail their unwanted drugs to the program for destruction.

Program operators may also offer collection of unwanted drugs through events.

### Who are the program operators?

The Drug Takeback Solutions Foundation and MED-Project USA are the program operators. They operate statewide drug take-back programs in accordance with the Drug Take-Back Law and all applicable federal and state laws, and pursuant to program plans approved by DEQ.

### Where can I find more information about Program services?

Starting in the fall, the program operators will offer a single website and toll-free telephone number to provide information on drop-off site locations and how to order mail-back envelopes for unwanted medicines. Until then, you can locate a participating drop-off site and find out how to obtain a pre-paid, pre-addressed envelope by visiting or calling the program operators at:

### Drug Takeback Solutions Foundation

Website: [safemedicinedrop.com](http://safemedicinedrop.com)  
Telephone: 1 (888) 371-0717  
Email: [take-back@inmar.com](mailto:take-back@inmar.com)



### MED-Project USA

Website: [med-project.org/locations/oregon](http://med-project.org/locations/oregon)  
Telephone: 1-844-482-5322  
Email: [oregon@med-project.org](mailto:oregon@med-project.org)

### Who can access Program services?

Collection services are for household disposal, not pharmaceutical waste from businesses. Per ORS 459A.200, services are available to Oregon residents; nonbusiness entities in Oregon; and ultimate users, as defined by 21 U.S.C. 802(27). The Program is not intended for law enforcement agencies or entities that

generate pharmaceutical waste, such as a hospital, health care clinic, office of a health care provider, veterinary clinic or pharmacy.

### Can tribal members in Oregon access the Program?

Yes. Approved drug take-back programs must serve Oregon residents, which include members of Oregon tribes.

### What drugs does the Program accept?

- Prescription drugs;
- Nonprescription drugs (over-the-counter drugs);
- Drugs marketed under a brand name;
- Drugs marketed under a generic name; and
- Combination products.

### What products are not accepted?

See ORS 459A.200(5)(c) for the full list.

Examples include:

- Exposed sharps;
- Vitamins or supplements;
- Herbal-based remedies or homeopathic products;
- Cosmetics that are also regulated as nonprescription drugs; and
- Drugs used for animal medicines, including parasiticide drugs for animals.



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### **What happens to collected drugs?**

Collected drugs are destroyed at a hazardous waste disposal facility or a municipal solid waste incinerator permitted to accept pharmaceutical waste.

### **What is DEQ's role?**

DEQ oversees the Program and works with the Oregon Board of Pharmacy to monitor program operators to ensure compliance with the Drug Take-Back Law and the program operators' approved plans.

### **How many drop-off sites will be in the Program?**

Each program operator must maintain a statewide network of drop-off sites and will work to establish at least one drop-off site in each county and in each population center (i.e., a city or town and the unincorporated area of the county within 10 miles from the center of the city or town), with an additional site for every 50,000 residents of the city or town located within a population center. If a program operator is unable to establish or maintain a required drop-off site, DEQ may approve the program operator to provide additional mail-back services or events.

### **Who can host a drop-off site?**

Per ORS 459A.200, the following can be authorized collectors that operate secure repositories at drop-off sites on a program operator's behalf: (a) a person that is registered with the DEA and that qualifies under federal law to collect and dispose of controlled substances or qualifies under federal law to have the person's registration modified in such a way that authorizes the person to collect and dispose of controlled substances; or (b) a law enforcement agency.

Examples of potential authorized collectors include pharmacies, police stations, narcotic treatment programs, and hospitals or clinics with an on-site pharmacy.

### **Can tribal pharmacies and tribal law enforcement agencies be authorized collectors?**

Yes. If a program operator enters into an agreement with a tribal pharmacy that registers with the Oregon Board of Pharmacy or a tribal law enforcement agency to collect drugs, DEQ will consider the pharmacy or law enforcement agency as part of the program's network of authorized collectors.

### **What happens to drug collection sites that existed prior to the Drug Take-Back Program launch?**

Existing collection sites can continue to operate independently outside a DEQ-approved statewide program. They will not be automatically rolled into a statewide program. An existing collection site is not

required to, but may choose to, enter into an agreement with a program operator to be an authorized collector.

### **Will the DEQ Drug Take-Back Program webpage or the Program website list drug collection sites not in the statewide program?**

No. Collection sites outside the Program may have separate standards on what drugs will be accepted. To avoid public confusion, the DEQ Drug Take-Back Program webpage and [medtakebackoregon.org](http://medtakebackoregon.org) will include information only on drop-off sites participating in a drug take-back program operated pursuant to a DEQ-approved plan.

### **For more information**

Additional information on the Drug Take-Back Program can be found at <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/Hazards-and-Cleanup/hw/Pages/drugtakeback.aspx>.

### **Alternative formats**

DEQ can provide documents in an alternate format or in a language other than English upon request. Call DEQ at 800-452-4011 or email [deqinfo@deq.state.or.us](mailto:deqinfo@deq.state.or.us).