



**CITY OF RICHMOND**  
**OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF**  
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**THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE**  
***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

April 1, 2019

**RICHMOND, VIRGINIA** – On Saturday, April 27, 2019 from 10 am to 2 pm, the Richmond City Sheriff's Office and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration will give the public its 17th opportunity in nine years to prevent pill abuse and theft by ridding their homes of potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs. The public will be able to bring pills for disposal to the Richmond City Sheriff's Office located at 1701 Fairfield Way in Richmond, VA. The collection will include all pills and patches. However, we are unable to accept liquids, needles, or sharps within this collection effort. This service is free to the community and anonymous. No questions will be asked.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Virginia had more than 1,000 overdose deaths due to opioids in 2017 and that death rate has seen a steady increase nationally since that reporting. This epidemic affects not only the individual but their families. With that in mind, we partnered with CVS Health in 2018 and installed a Medical Disposal Unit in our front lobby area to provide the community with a safe and responsible way to counter drug abuse and encourage safe drug disposal. The Medical Disposal Unit is available for our community's use on a daily bases and resourced by the grant received from CVS' Safer Communities Program. The Richmond City Sheriff's Office is committed to continuing our on-going efforts of promoting public safety and to reduce the spread of this epidemic.

Last fall Americans turned in nearly 460 tons (more than 900,000 pounds) of prescription drugs at more than 5,800 sites operated by the DEA and almost 4,800 of its state and local law enforcement partners. Overall, in its 16 previous Take Back events, DEA and its partners have taken in almost 11 million pounds—nearly 5,500 tons—of pills.

This initiative addresses a vital public safety and public health issue. Medicines that languish in home cabinets are highly susceptible to diversion, misuse, and abuse. Rates of prescription drug abuse in the U.S. are alarmingly high, as are the number of accidental poisonings and overdoses due to these drugs. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Survey on Drug Use and Health shows year after year that the majority of misused and abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including someone else's medication being stolen from the home medicine cabinet. In addition, Americans are now advised that their usual methods for disposing of unused medicines—flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the trash—both pose potential safety and health hazards.

For more information about the disposal of prescription drugs or about the April 27 Take Back Day event, go to [www.DEATakeBack.com](http://www.DEATakeBack.com)

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