



# A GUIDE FOR PROPER DISPOSAL OF PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS AND SHARPS

Information and resources for funeral directors to provide to their clients about properly disposing of prescription drugs and sharps.

Oftentimes recently deceased individuals have unused prescription medications and/or sharps left in their homes. This flyer includes tips that can help keep the community safe by preventing accidental poisonings and protecting the environment from harmful toxins.

## Why is proper medication and sharps disposal important?

-  Unused medications pose the potential risk of:
  -  Poisoning - Children or pets may ingest the medication and become sick or die.
  -  Unsafe non-medical use - Drug overdose deaths are a leading cause of accidental deaths in the United States. Many people who abuse prescription pain relievers get them from friends or relatives.
  -  Theft - Prescription medications can be illegally sold or given away.
-  Improperly disposing of prescription medications directly into the trash leaves them accessible for non-medical use.
-  Flushing medications down the toilet can pollute water systems.
-  Properly disposing of sharps helps protect children, pets, and sanitary workers that collect household trash.
-  Safely disposing of sharps helps stop the spread of diseases such as HIV and hepatitis.

## What can funeral directors do to help?

Add resources for properly disposing of prescription medications and sharps to the checklist of pre- and post- funeral planning materials. This can include the following:

-  A list of prescription drug drop box locations within Clermont County. There are several convenient locations where medications can be dropped off for safe disposal. There is no cost to use the drop boxes.
-  Information on how to properly dispose of medical sharps. Sharps should be placed into a thick plastic bottle or jug, such as a laundry detergent bottle, sealed with duct tape, and labeled "Sharps." The container can then be disposed of with the household trash.

For more information on prescription drug safety and substance misuse, visit [www.clermontcountyhealthdistrict.org](http://www.clermontcountyhealthdistrict.org) or [www.getcleannowclermont.org](http://www.getcleannowclermont.org).



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