



Receiving medical care at home presents disposal challenges for Cobb families

****Medical Waste and Sharps (needles, syringes and lancets) are not accepted at any Cobb County Fire Station or Cobb Police Department Precinct unless an organized, advertised event occurs****

Many residents of Cobb County or their family members have medical conditions that require treatment at home. Some of these treatments can generate biomedical waste including sharps and bodily fluids. This material must be properly disposed of to protect human health and the environment.

For residents, Georgia state law allows the disposal of medical waste in household trash, but only if the waste is generated as a result of self-care or treatment of family members in their homes. There are regulations for disposal and you should comply by following these guidelines:

- If you have a full biomedical container, such as colostomy or urostomy bags, you must dispose of the urine or fecal matter through a wastewater treatment system or septic tank. Wearing protective gloves, empty the contents of the container into your toilet and flush. The empty container can then be placed into a sealable plastic bag and disposed of with your regular trash.
- If you are disposing of “sharps” such as syringes, needles or lancets, you must place the items into a sealed, puncture proof container before disposing of that container in your household trash. Follow these steps:
 - Place used sharps in a rigid plastic container, such as bleach or detergent bottle with a screw top lid or a sharps container (sold at local pharmacies). Some pharmacies also offer kits that can be mailed in for disposal.
 - When two-thirds full, screw or snap the lid on tightly and tape it in place with duct tape. With a permanent marker, clearly label the containers “Bio-Hazard” unless already marked such as an approved sharps container..
 - Place the container into your household trash cart for collection.

Georgia State regulations concerning the disposal of biomedical wastes can be found at:

[http://rules.sos.ga.gov/GAC/391-3-4-.15#391-3-4-.15\(6\)](http://rules.sos.ga.gov/GAC/391-3-4-.15#391-3-4-.15(6))

Keep Cobb Beautiful also hosts several medication and sharps disposal days. Scheduled events can be found at:

<http://www.keepcobbbeautiful.org/medication-disposal>

Website with links to programs that provide disposal containers for specific injectable medications that can be mailed back to the company for disposal:

<http://www.safeneedledisposal.org/solutions/pharmaceutical-programs/>





Disposing of prescription medications present disposal challenges for Cobb families

****Expired or unwanted prescription medications are not accepted at any Cobb County Fire Station or Cobb Police Department Precinct unless an organized, advertised event occurs****

Many Cobb County citizens have expired or unwanted prescription medications in their homes. Possession of certain medications, such as prescription pain killers, could create the opportunity of abuse by other family members. Unwanted medications could also lead to accidental poisoning or overdose of young children. These medications need to be disposed of properly to protect citizens and the environment.

There are Federal and Georgia guidelines for disposing of prescription drugs that prevent abuse, accidental overdose, and protects U.S. water sources. Please follow these guidelines from the Georgia Office of the Attorney General:

- Check to see if a secured Drug Drop Box is in your area. You can go to the web link: <http://stoprxabuseinga.org/prescription-drug-disposal/> to find a location.
 - Current Cobb County locations include:
 - Marietta Police Department—Monday—Friday 8:00AM—5:00PM
 - Acworth Police Department—Monday—Friday 8:00AM—5:00 PM
 - Kennesaw State University Public Safety Building—24/7
- Keep Cobb Beautiful holds several Medication Disposal Days. For a list of dates and locations, go to <http://www.keepcobbbeautiful.org/medication-disposal>
- Self disposal: Flushing of certain drugs or disposal in household trash
 - Advice is available at the FDA website at <https://www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/BuyingUsingMedicineSafely/EnsuringSafeUseofMedicine/SafeDisposalofMedicines/ucm186187.htm#MEDICINES>
 - **Do not flush** prescription drugs down the toilet or drain unless specifically instructed on the label or by the accompanying patient guide provided by your pharmacist.
 - Take the medications out of their original containers and remove or conceal any personal information or prescription number off the container.
 - Mix the drugs with an undesirable material such as wet kitty litter or used coffee grounds.
 - Put the mixture and the empty medication containers in a sealable bag or other container (e.g. empty coffee can) and seal with tape.
 - Place sealed container with mixture and empty drug containers in with household trash.