



# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

701 OCEAN STREET, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073

(831) 454-2000 WWW.SANTACRUZCOUNTY.US

SUSAN A. MAURIELLO, J.D., COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

## PRESS RELEASE

Date: April 24, 2017  
Contact: Jason Hoppin  
Communications Manager  
831-454-3401

### Santa Cruz County Celebrates Prescription Drug Take Back Day

April 29 is "National Prescription Drug Take Back Day," a federal program designed to encourage safe, convenient, and responsible ways of disposing of prescription drugs, while also educating the general public about the potential for abuse of medications.

The program is designed to address several interrelated national issues:

- Addiction to opiates is at an all-time high in America, due in part to the easy availability of leftover medicines in homes across the country.
- Drug overdoses are also soaring, especially among the young and the elderly.
- Leftover drugs are feeding a lucrative black market, encouraging crime and abuse.
- Leftover medicines and used sharps are polluting our environment, endangering the public and causing harm to wildlife.
- There is a lack of safe and convenient ways to dispose of leftover drugs and used sharps.

Santa Cruz County and all local cities have taken a bold and innovative approach to the problem. Local ordinances now require all pharmacies to accept used sharps and leftover medicines for proper disposal at no cost to the consumer. The program is paid for by pharmaceutical manufacturers, and there is no cost to pharmacies or local taxpayers. Santa Cruz County has won a number of awards for this groundbreaking program.

"The program has been a great success. Almost all local pharmacies are now on board, and the rest will be soon," said County planner Tim Goncharoff, who



# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

701 OCEAN STREET, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073

(831) 454-2000 WWW.SANTACRUZCOUNTY.US

SUSAN A. MAURIELLO, J.D., COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

administers the local program. "Last year alone, we collected more than 17,000 pounds of drugs and over 10,000 pounds of needles. This is a big step forward for the people and environment of Santa Cruz County."

Residents are encouraged to ask their local pharmacist about the program. The County wants to remind people that used needles and leftover medicines should never be flushed or thrown in the trash.

"Just take them back to the pharmacy next time you go," Goncharoff. "What could be easier?"

For more info on local programs, go to: [www.santacruzcountyrecycles.org](http://www.santacruzcountyrecycles.org),

For more info on National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, go to:  
[https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug\\_disposal/takeback/](https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/)