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Drug take-back event to collect and dispose of unwanted medications

Organizers hope to prevent drug abuse, and keep medications out of the water supply

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ROANOKE, Va.—

What's in your medicine cabinet? And how do you deal with outdated prescriptions? The answers to those questions could have an impact on public health and the local environment. Later this month, the region's second drug take-back event will collect and destroy unused and expired medications.

The Roanoke Wastewater Treatment Plant processes more than 30-million gallons of water a day. What it cannot clear are prescription drugs that are poured down the sink, or flushed down the toilet. Sarah Baumgardner is a spokesperson for the Western Virginia Water Authority. "It is critical that you do not flush this down the toilet because we don't anything going out into our waterways or geting into

the nation's waterways that could potentially be a harm to the environment, Baumgardner told News 7 Thursday morning.

Last September, Roanoke's first drug take-back program collected more than 380 pounds of outdated or unwanted prescription drugs. The Roanoke Area Youth Substance Abuse Coalition says it was a promising start in a continuing effort to prevent prescription drug abuse.

Kathy Graham Sullivan is the Coordinator of RAYSAC. "Most kids, 70 percent of folks who abuse prescription drugs get them from the medicine chest," Sullivan said in an interview, "so we're trying to educate the public about how to dispose of them properly and also lock up your medications."

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The drug take-back event is Saturday April 30th from 10AM until 2PM, with four locations in the Roanoke Valley, including the Roanoke Civic Center, Salem Police Department and the Kroger stores in Daleville and at Tanglewood Mall.

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