

# Park Place

## Block Captain Community Watch Program

### **Disposing of no longer needed prescriptions.**

What do you do with prescription medications that are left unused? Most of us might just hide the container in a drawer somewhere while it collects dust—after all, we have no more use for them. But what you might not know is this poses a serious risk for others around the house,

Many of us might think the safer alternative is to flush the medications down the toilet or drain—seems quick and easy right? The truth is the chemicals found in these medications can pose a threat to our aquatic environment because our water treatment systems are not designed to remove toxic drugs.

Thankfully, there is a safe and more effective way to dispose of our unwanted medications that also prevents accidental ingestion. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection advises that you follow these seven easy steps to ensure your medications are properly disposed of:

#### **For pills and capsules**

1. Keep the medicines in the original container. This will help identify the contents if they are accidentally ingested.
2. Mark out your name and prescription number for safety.
3. For pills: add some water or soda to start dissolving them.

#### **For liquids: add something inedible like cat litter, dirt or cayenne pepper.**

1. Close the lid and secure with duct or packing tape.
  2. Place the bottle(s) inside an opaque (non see-through) container like a coffee can or plastic laundry bottle.
  3. Tape that container closed.
  4. Hide the container in the trash.
- **Do Not:** Give drugs to anyone else.
  - **Do Not:** Flush drugs down the toilet.
  - **Do Not:** Put drugs in the trash without disguising them—human or animal scavengers may find them and misuse them.
  - **Do Not:** Put container in the recycle bin.

By following these easy steps to properly dispose of your prescription medications, you can ensure the safety of everyone in your household, as well as your community. Don't let your unused drugs pose a safety hazard.