

Legislation Text

File #: 19728, **Version:** 1

Fiscal Note

No appropriation is required at this time. The role of Public Health will be to perform planning, including the identification of strategies and partners and the determination of funding requirements. No fiscal impact is anticipated regarding development of the plan. Implementation of any plans in the future may require funding, which would be requested as needed in future year budgets.

Title

Developing a program for on-going collection and disposal of household pharmaceuticals in Madison and Dane County.

Body

WHEREAS, the disposal of unused household pharmaceuticals is a public health, public safety, and environmental issue. Unwanted, unused prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines can be found in every household in the city. Un-needed medicines in the house can pose a threat to children and others who may accidentally or intentionally take them. Flushing medicines down the toilet or drain, or putting them in the trash is hazardous for the environment,; and,

WHEREAS, research supports the need for an effective approach to collecting and disposing of un-used medications:

- An extensive nationwide study by the US Geologic Survey has found evidence of pharmaceuticals including antibiotics and hormonal drugs, such as birth control pills, in surface waters throughout the nation.
- The Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene discovered accumulations of endocrine-disrupting chemicals found in drugs such as birth control pills that mimic natural hormones in water entering and leaving Madison's sewage treatment plant.
- According to the World Health Organization, antibiotics in water supplies are a potential concern because the most frequently used antibiotics are becoming less effective as the infections they are designed to combat become resistant. That resistance increases with heightened exposure to the drugs.
- Studies conducted throughout the country have uncovered pharmaceuticals in drinking water, and the negative effects of these substances on the general population are only now beginning to be studied and understood.
- Reports from the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) show the number of emergency room visits more than doubled nationally between 2004-2008, due to misuse of prescription medicines.
- According to the 2009 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey, one in five high school students say they have taken a prescription drug without a doctor's prescription.
- The 2008 National Survey on Drug Use and Health revealed that 582,000 Wisconsin residents, ages 12 and older, used a prescription medication for non-medical purposes in the past year.

- Nationally, 70.2% of respondents said they got the pain medication they misused from a friend or relative.
- Prescription drugs are the leading type of poisoning overdoses resulting in death or hospitalization in Madison and Dane County, for residents ages 15 years and older; and,

WHEREAS, MedDrop, an effort managed by volunteer pharmacists, hazardous and solid waste and wastewater experts, has held pharmaceutical collection events in Dane County twice a year since 2007. MedDrop accepts prescription medicine, over the counter medicine, medications for pets, vitamins, nebulizer solution, and inhalers. During the collection events, illegal drugs are also accepted, and turned over to authorities for immediate disposal. Police officers are on site at the MedDrop events to make sure controlled substances are handled properly; and,

WHEREAS, the MedDrop events have been very successful. For example, the June 5, 2010, MedDrop was the most successful medication collection yet. More than 2,400 cars drove through one of the three MedDrop sites and approximately 5,600 pounds of medications were collected, including over 630 pounds of controlled medications were collected. Another event is planned for October 2, 2010, in Madison. However, despite this success, it is important to develop a permanent drop-off program in Dane County to expand access for residents year-round and in multiple locations; and

WHEREAS, the MedDrop organization has offered to provide Madison with permanent drop boxes to initiate an on-going program of pharmaceutical collection and disposal. Development of this program will require working with local police departments, other law enforcement entities and other stakeholders to create secure sites for the drop boxes, a strategy for collection and disposal of the pharmaceuticals, and identification of costs and potential sources of revenue.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Madison Common Council requests the Public Health Madison-Dane County to work with partners to develop a program to provide on-going collection of medications in order to safeguard the public health and safety and to protect Madison and Dane County waters. Key partners include the Madison Police Department, Dane County Department of Land and Water Resources, the Sheriff's Office, Dane County Public Works, Highway and Transportation, other municipalities, area health care providers, local pharmacies, Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District, other local police departments, and others.