



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

Helping Yorktown Stay Safe: Senator Murphy's Shed the Meds Keeps hazardous drugs off the streets

TERRENCE MURPHY August 23, 2017

| ISSUE: **SHED THE MEDS, COMBATING HEROIN AND OPIOID ADDICTION; SHED THE MEDS, DRUG TAKE BACK**



Yorktown, NY - The sales of prescription having quadrupled since 1999. Sadly, so have the number of deaths from overdoses related to prescription opioids. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Opioids (including prescription opioids and heroin) killed more than 33,000 people in 2015, more than any year on record. Nearly half of all opioid overdose deaths in the U.S. involve a prescription opioid.

Senator Terrence Murphy has taken action to help reduce the number of prescription overdoses through his Shed the Meds Prescription Drop-off Program. The program helps residents dispose of their outdated prescription drugs and keep children, adults, and seniors safe. On August 22, Senator Murphy partnered with Assemblyman Keviin Byrne the Town of Yorktown, the Yorktown Police Department, Drug Crisis in Our Backyard, The Alliance for Safe Kids (ASK), and Yorktown Against Heroin (YAH) to host a Shed the Meds program at Jefferson Village. Last year, the Senator's successful program took over 1,000 pounds of prescription drugs out of circulation.

"As a Yorktown native, I have seen firsthand the devastation the abuse of prescription drugs can leave in its wake," said Senator Murphy. "The amount of prescription drugs we took out of circulation today will make a huge difference. I remain committed to protecting our families and our community from this epidemic that is consuming our nation."

"Prescription drug abuse is one of the fastest growing health problems in the country. We take it for granted that children or the elderly may accidentally take unwanted or expired medications," said Yorktown Town Supervisor Michael Grace. "Also, unused prescription drugs that have been thrown in the trash can be retrieved or illegally sold. They are a threat to our families and our community."

"Shed the Meds is a much needed outlet for not only getting rid of unused medications, but a strong piece in the educating of the public for the need to keep meds locked up and cared for," added Yorktown Town Councilman Ed Lachterman. "It is much easier to be over cautious when dealing with meds then to try and help a person break the addictions to them if they start to abuse them. I commend the Senator for being the leader of this charge against drugs."

"One way we can stop the rising influx of prescription drug addiction and the distressing number of opioid-related overdoses is through programs like Shed the Meds, where people can voluntarily turn in potentially dangerous drugs," said Yorktown Councilman and YAH founder Tom Diana. "Yorktown Against Heroin will continue to work to increase public awareness about dangerous drugs, including prescription medications, and be proactive to find and implement solutions that will protect our community from this devastating epidemic."

Tricy Cushner, President of The Alliance for Safe Kids commented, "As a community coalition that works with all sectors in Yorktown, the Alliance for Safe Kids (ASK) is grateful to partner with Senator Murphy and the Yorktown Police Department as we share awareness and the opportunity to safely dispose of unwanted prescription drugs. More than 70 percent of young people abusing prescription pain relievers get them through friends or family, a statistic that includes raiding the family medicine cabinet. Safely disposing of expired or unused prescription medicine is a critical step in helping protect our youth."

Anyone with unwanted or expired medications can bring them to a Shed the Meds event where they will be disposed of safely. However, needles cannot be accepted.

Safe disposal helps protect the environment and eliminates the risk of these drugs getting into the hands of small children or those who might misuse them. Improper disposal of medications, such as pouring them down the drain or flushing them down the toilet, can potentially pollute local waterways.

The dates and locations for future Shed the Meds summer programs are:

Lewisboro - Tuesday, August 29 at the Lewisboro Police Department, 79 Bouton Road in South Salem.

Carmel - Wednesday, September 6 at Carmel Town Hall, 60 McAlpin Avenue in Mahopac.

ALL SHED THE MEDS EVENTS ARE SCHEDULED TO RUN FROM 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.