**How is medicine collected?**

In the absence of a legislated approach for managing leftover medicine at the federal or state level, all drug take-back programs operating in the Great Lakes states are voluntary initiatives. Medicine is collected through retail pharmacies, clinics, law enforcement agencies, municipal facilities, and mail-back programs, as well as one-day events.

1. Government and community groups in each state, along with local law enforcement, participate in the Drug Enforcement Administration’s (DEA) **National Prescription Drug Take-Back** bi-annual collection events. In addition, some hold one-day collections separate from the DEA’s bi-annual events.

2. **Permanent drop-off collection sites** have also been established in every Great Lakes state, although the distribution of sites and level of convenience vary considerably. For example, Minnesota has drop boxes primarily at law enforcement locations, whereas Michigan has over 250 pharmacy-based collection sites participating in the **Yellow Jug, Old Drugs** program. For a list of take-back programs and locations near you, visit [www.productstewardship.us/drugtakeback-locations](http://www.productstewardship.us/drugtakeback-locations).

3. Additionally, the University of Wisconsin Extension (UWEX) piloted a **mail-back program, Get the Meds Out**, which provided Wisconsin

**How are programs funded?**

Program funding sources also vary by jurisdiction. State government agencies in Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin support drug take-back programs through grants or direct funding, while New York and Ohio have provided free drop boxes.
This multi-state drug take-back program is operated by the Great Lakes Clean Water Organization (GLCWO), a nonprofit committed to protecting the Great Lakes by safely collecting and disposing of unused and unwanted medicines. GLCWO partners with retail pharmacies, which pay $300 annually to serve as collection sites and, in return, GLCWO manages all program logistics. This unique model began in April 2009 in Michigan and has since been adopted by 250 independent pharmacies across the state. Beginning in 2012, pharmacies in Wisconsin and Illinois also started joining the program, and GLCWO plans to have the program available in all of the Great Lakes states by 2015. Currently, only non-controlled drugs are accepted. However, it has always been GLCWO’s intent to accept controlled substances in the future. In fact, GLCWO is now taking steps that will allow the Yellow Jug, Old Drugs program to collect controlled substances in accordance with anticipated new DEA regulations. In addition to the financial support from participating pharmacies, Yellow Jug, Old Drugs receives funding from various sources, including the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, for operational and outreach activities (for example, a documentary that examines the potential environmental impacts of improper drug disposal, which will be released in 2013). As of September 2013, 40 tons of pharmaceuticals have been collected, which demonstrates the program’s success and reach.

After Hennepin County participated in a DEA take-back event in September 2010, the Department of Environmental Services decided to fund and organize four one-day pharmaceutical collection events in 2011. Together, these events collected more than 5,500 pounds of medicine, averaging 2.5 pounds per participant. Motivated to address water contamination concerns, the Department then partnered with the county Sheriff’s Office, which had prioritized drug abuse prevention as one of its top issues. Building on the success of the one-day collection events, the Department began providing residents with permanent medicine drop-offs: three at police departments in early 2012, and another three at district courts throughout the county. Additionally, law enforcement officers began making scheduled visits to independent senior housing facilities (not long-term care facilities) to make medicine collection convenient for seniors. Funding for the program comes from Department of Environmental Services’ operating budget, which is supported by revenue from tipping fees at the county-owned waste-to-energy facility. The Sheriff’s Office provides in-kind staff time to empty the drop-off boxes, store the medicine, and then transport them to an in-state waste combustion facility. This program has demonstrated success in its first few years and has collected data through participant surveys.