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## Buffalo County Health Department Prevent. Promote. Protect.

FROM: April Loeffler, Buffalo County Public Health Officer (608-685-6323)  
Michael Schmidtknecht, Buffalo County Sheriff (608-685-4433)  
DATE: July 12, 2016  
RELEASE: Upon receipt

### (BUFFALO COUNTY PROMOTES SAFE DRUG DISPOSAL WITH NEW COLLECTION UNIT)

ALMA, WI – Buffalo County law enforcement and health officials announced today that the county has been awarded a grant from CVS/pharmacy to install a drug collection unit. The new unit will be located at the Buffalo County Courthouse in Alma and will provide residents with a safe and environmentally responsible way to dispose of unwanted, unused or expired medication, including controlled substances.

The drug collection unit is housed outside the Buffalo County Sheriff's Office on the second floor of the courthouse at 407 S Second Street, Alma. The Sheriff's Office is open to the public during normal courthouse hours (Monday through Friday from 8 am to 4:30 pm). Drugs can be dropped off with no questions asked.

The new unit is intended to reduce the amount of unneeded medicine in residents' homes and decrease prescription drug abuse, which has soared in recent years, especially among teenagers. More than 70 percent of teenagers say it is easy to get prescription drugs from their parents' medicine cabinets, according to a 2014 Partnership for Drug-Free Kids study.

The new unit will also help Buffalo County prevent the contamination of local landfills and water supplies from unused medication.

Right now, Buffalo County has sponsored Drug Take Back events yearly and has collected between 35-70 pounds at each event. The most recent event in April 2016 collected 67 pounds. This collection unit will allow Buffalo County residents to properly dispose of unwanted medications all year round.

"Safely disposing of unused medication is critical to protecting our children and our environment," said Sheriff Michael Schmidtknecht. In addition, April Loeffler, Buffalo County Public Health Officer, said "Removing unused medications around Buffalo County also limits their use in suicide attempts."

The new drug collection unit represents one of 1,000 units provided country-wide by CVS/pharmacy and [The Medicine Abuse Project](#) (MAP), a five-year initiative of The Partnership for Drug-Free Kids. This innovative donation program is the largest retail pharmacy effort of its kind to date and supports MAP's goal to prevent a half million teenagers from abusing prescription medication by the year 2017. CVS/pharmacy is the sole retail pharmacy sponsor of this program, which builds on the company's [Medication Disposal for Safer Communities Program](#).

"CVS/pharmacy is dedicated to collaborating with organizations like The Partnership for Drug-Free Kids and local law enforcement to prevent the abuse of unwanted and expired medication," said Josh Flum, Senior Vice President of Retail Pharmacy at CVS Health. "The installment of drug collection receptacles is part of our ongoing commitment to battle prescription drug abuse in the U.S. and to help people in the communities we serve on their path to better health."

CVS/pharmacy also assists law enforcement by supporting local drug take back events and promoting local drug disposal collection sites. CVS/pharmacy has conducted drug collection campaigns utilizing their retail locations, including several National Drug Take Back Day events. Law enforcement agencies which operate their own on-going collection site programs can also arrange to have the address and hours of their operations posted in local CVS/pharmacy stores.

The Partnership for Drug-Free Kids is dedicated to reducing teen substance abuse and supporting families impacted by addiction. It develops public education campaigns that drive awareness of teen substance abuse and leads teen-targeted efforts that inspire young people to make positive decisions to stay healthy and avoid drugs and alcohol.

For more information about the Buffalo County drug collection unit, call the Buffalo County Sheriff's Department at 608-685-4433 or the Buffalo County Health Department at 608-685-6329. For more information about the Medication Disposal for Safer Community Program, call 1-866-559-8830 (toll-free) or visit [www.cvs.com/safercommunities](http://www.cvs.com/safercommunities). For more information about the Partnership for Drug-Free Kids, call the toll-free helpline (1-855-DRUGFREE) or visit [www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org).