



**MADISON COUNTY  
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**Madison County: Don't Flush Your Medications!**

[Submitted by Sharon A. Driscoll, Public Information Officer for Madison County]

Be responsible, Madison County! Bring your expired and unwanted medications to the Safe Pill Drop scheduled from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 24 at the Buyea Rd. Landfill site in the Town of Lincoln. The site is exactly three (3) miles south of the traffic light on Rte 5 in Wampsville.

Flushing your drugs can be hazardous to the environment. Although, the level of risk to humans has not been fully assessed, impacts on aquatic life have been well documented.

A recent study by the US Geological Survey found so-called intersex fish at about one-third of sites tested in the Apalachicola, Colorado, Columbia, Mississippi, Mobile, Pee Dee, Rio Grande, Savannah and Yukon River basins. The condition affected a third of male smallmouth bass and a fifth of all male largemouth bass at those sites.

Pharmaceuticals and other drugs enter the wastewater stream through human excretion, manufacturing facilities discharges and by individuals flushing or pouring medications down the drain. The NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the NYS Dept of Health (NYSDOH) have joined forces to raise public awareness of the growing body of evidence on the presence and impact of pharmaceuticals in the environment.

Environmentalists are concerned. "The intersex fish are like the canary in the coal mine," says Katherine Baer of the national nonprofit group American Rivers. "We see what's happening to the fish, and the water they're swimming in is the water we are drinking."

And, there is another worry lurking on the horizon – reports that the abuse of prescription and over-the-counter medication is becoming increasingly popular among American youth. Parents should remain aware and vigilant when it comes to the various means that young people may be using to put themselves at risk i.e., prescription and over-the-counter drugs.