



A Prescription To Get Green on Earth Day

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Austin, TX

A new pharmacy in Austin is giving people a way to get rid of old or unused medicine that's collecting around the house, thrown in the garbage or flushed down the toilet.



[Live Oak Pharmacy](#) just opened up on 5th Street, near Mopac, two weeks ago. And co-owner Scot Maitland says on Thursday – [Earth Day](#) – they will launch start Austin's first pharmaceutical take-back program.

"If your doctor has changed your prescription or put on a different strength and you have left medication we can take those back so it can be for mood enhancement like a wellbutrin or something along those lines," said Maitland. "Another place that we can really be helpful is we have people that have passed away."

For no cost, people can bring in unused or expired medication from Tylenol, to allergy medicine, birth control, even heart pills.

"We can't take back your painkiller, oxycontin, morphine, things of those nature," warned Maitland.

Those meds, like Vicodin and Xanax, are considered controlled substances.

"In order to take control substances, a law enforcement officer has to be involved in the program," said Jeannie Jaramillo, Pharm.D, managing director of the the Medication Clean Out in Amarillo.

The [Medication Clean Out](#) is an organization that hosts a drive-thru pharmaceutical drop-off. There are not very many programs like these in Texas. Even though patients are routinely advised not to flush or throw unused medication away.

Though they are the toughest to get rid of, Jaramillo says, prescriptions like Vicodin and morphine are extra important to keep out drinking water, landfills, and the wrong hands.

"They are the more toxic substances so if you had to prioritize what you were going to get rid of, they are would rank pretty high. And they're also very susceptible to abuse."

A [state advisory board](#) is looking at a state program for disposing of pharmaceuticals. Their next meeting is on April 22. In the meantime, Live Oak Pharmacy in Austin will begin taking your old meds starting Thursday.

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— Erika Aguilar

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Sounds

Sound: no description

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