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### **Summer Medication Take Back Days**

Riverhead, NY – On August 3, 2017, the Riverhead Community Coalition for Safe and Drug-Free Youth and Riverhead Police Department collected 95 lbs. of unwanted, unused, and expired medication during their annual Senior Citizen Mobile Medication Take Back event. In an effort to make it easy and convenient for seniors to safely dispose of their medication, the coalition and police department spent the day, visiting residents at Calverton Meadows, Foxwood Village, Glenwood Village and John Wesley I, II, & III. Staff from Riverhead Community Awareness Program, Inc. (CAP) were there to help educate seniors about the importance of monitoring their medication, safely storing and disposing their medication.

“Far too many people have unused, unwanted, and expired medication in their homes which can lead to accidental overdose by our seniors. Furthermore, people who are experiencing addiction have to look no further than Grandma’s medicine cabinet to get their fix,” CAP Community Prevention Specialist Cynthia Redmond said. “We will continue to work with the police department and our other partners to raise awareness about the safe disposal of medication and how it contributes to the prevention of prescription drug abuse in our community.”

On **Saturday, August 26, 2017**, Riverhead Community Coalition for Safe and Drug Free Youth and Riverhead Town will conduct another Medication Take Back event in conjunction with the Town of Riverhead’s S.T.O.P. Day (Stop Throwing Out Pollutants) at the Highway Department located at 1177 Osborne Avenue, Riverhead. Residents can drop off their medication between 8:00 AM and 3:00 PM. Information and giveaways are available to participants.

For residents who are unable to attend S.T.O.P. Day, Riverhead residents can always safely dispose of their medication in the Medication Drop Box, located in the lobby of the Riverhead Police Department at 210 Howell Avenue. Since the permanent Medication Drop Box was installed in August 2014, over 3,500 lbs. of medication has been collected.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), prescription drug abuse is the fastest growing drug problem in the United States, especially among teens. The CDC reports that one in five teens say they have taken prescription drugs without a doctor’s prescription and each day more than 2,000 teens use prescription drugs to get high for the first time. **The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) found that nearly half of young people who inject heroin reported abusing prescription painkillers before starting to use heroin.** Some individuals reported taking up heroin because it is cheaper and easier

[riverheadcap.org](http://riverheadcap.org)

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to obtain than prescription drugs. In addition, more people die from prescription drug overdoses than from all illegal drugs combined. In fact, prescription drug deaths are now the leading cause of accidental death in the U.S., outnumbering highway traffic fatalities.

The mission of the Riverhead Community Coalition for Safe and Drug-Free Youth is to engage collaborative partners in the planning, implementation and evaluation of strategies that prevent youth substance use. In 2013, the coalition was awarded a 5-year Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Support Grant through the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). For more information about the coalition, or to participate, please call Riverhead CAP at (631) 727-3722 or visit [RiverheadCAP.org](http://RiverheadCAP.org).

The attached photo shows Riverhead coalition members representing the Riverhead Police Department, NY National Guard Counterdrug Task Force, and Riverhead CAP, at Glenwood Village.

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