



**PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**  
300 N. San Antonio Road • Santa Barbara, CA 93110  
(805) 681-5102 • FAX (805) 681-5191  
[www.countyofsb.org](http://www.countyofsb.org)

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **November 22, 2019**

**News Media Contact:**

Jackie Ruiz, MPH  
Public Information Officer  
(805) 896-1057 (cell)  
[jacruiz@sbcpd.org](mailto:jacruz@sbcpd.org)

### **SAFE MEDICINE DISPOSAL PROGRAM A SUCCESS IN SANTA BARBARA COUNTY**

#### ***MED-Project Program Releases Annual Report***

**(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.)** -- The Santa Barbara County MED-Project, which operates a local program to collect unwanted medications, has released its first annual report for 2018. The collection of unwanted medicine began in early 2018 and during the year collection occurred at 32 Kiosk Drop-Off sites established throughout Santa Barbara County. Approximately 9,000 pounds of unused medications were collected during 2018. The former “Operation Medicine Cabinet” was collecting 9,000 pounds of unwanted medication with all costs covered by County funds. In contrast, pharmaceutical companies that sell products in this county pay for the newly established MED-Project program.

The safe medication disposal program was developed because of the Extended Producer Responsibility Ordinance passed by the Board of Supervisors in 2016. This program assures that any unwanted (expired or excess) medications can be disposed of in a safe and efficient manner in our county. The program also ensures protection of the environment with the elimination of flushing unwanted medicines down the drain, or having them exposed to theft in the trash. Santa Barbara County Environmental Health Services oversees this program.

Projections for 2019 anticipate 9,000 pounds of unwanted medicines will be collected in the second year. Early indications are that the projection will be exceeded significantly. “Assuring that unused and unwanted medications are disposed of properly is critical to protecting the environment from introduction of pharmaceutical chemicals into our surface and ground water as well as reducing the risk of opioid/narcotic abuse. The MED-Project provides a system of convenient and accessible safe drop-off locations for unwanted medications that all citizens are encouraged to use” shared Larry Fay, Environmental Health Services Director for the Public Health Department.

To locate a Drop-Off Kiosk near you, visit <https://med-project.org/locations/santa-barbara/>.