

# Managing Your

# Unused MEDICATION



When there isn't an easy way to properly manage unused medications, people tend to accumulate them at home. If you have a supply of excess or expired medications in your home, it is important to remove them. **Orleans Essex VIVA & Hospice (OEVNA) offers medication destruction to clients for FREE.** Simply ask your care giver for their assistance.

## Why Is It Important to Properly Manage Unused Medications?

Excess medications can create confusion, and could lead to taking the wrong medication or dosage. This can affect your health or that of your family.

If you have opioids or other controlled substances, removing them from your home can **prevent substance abuse**. Often, people who misuse prescription medications get them from a friend or relative, often without their knowledge, straight from their medicine cabinet. Ensuring that unused medications do not get into the wrong hands is critical.

Orleans / Essex  
**VIVA**  
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## Why Can't I Just Throw Them in the Trash or Flush Them Down the Toilet?

Medications that are thrown in the trash can be retrieved and misused. Trash that is generated in Vermont ends up in a landfill where any drugs in the waste can be released to the environment and potentially impact wildlife and public health.

Flushing medications can pollute water supplies. If you have a septic system, you are polluting the groundwater at your house. If your home is on a sewer system, the treatment plant does not remove medications, and they are discharged to receiving waters where they can harm people and wildlife.

Keeping pharmaceuticals out of septic systems, landfills, and wastewater treatment systems is the best way to prevent pollution.



**Medication destruction is offered FREE to clients, just ask your Orleans Essex VNA & Hospice staff member to get started!**

**NEWMOA**  
NORTHEAST WASTE MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS' ASSOCIATION

[www.newmoa.org](http://www.newmoa.org)

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