

NEWS RELEASE

October 19, 2010

MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

**411 NORTH 5TH ST
SHELTON, WA 98584**

TO: KMAS, KRXY, SHELTON-MASON COUNTY JOURNAL, THE OLYMPIAN, SHELTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, NORTH MASON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, CITY OF SHELTON, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, THE SUN

RE: Mason County Unwanted Drug Take Back Program

The Mason County Board of Health is pleased to announce that Mason County now has two secure locations where citizens can dispose of unwanted prescription of any type and over the counter drugs. Commissioner Ring Erickson met a concerned citizen of Mason County, Sally Burtcher, who spoke of the need for a safe and secure means of disposing of unwanted drugs. Commissioner Ring Erickson brought the concern to the Mason County Board of Health and the Board wholeheartedly directed the health department to work on establishing a drug take-back program for Mason County. Mason County Sheriff Casey Salisbury supports the program and will ensure that the drugs are collected from the take back boxes and properly disposed of.

To celebrate the implementation of the Mason County Drug Take Back Program, a ribbon cutting is planned for Thursday, October 28, 2010 at 10:00 AM in Belfair at Fire District #2 followed by a ribbon cutting at 2:00 PM in Shelton at the Mason County Sheriff's Office as the kick off for the two new tamper resistant drug take back boxes. The public is welcome to come out and help celebrate this important program.

The Mason County Board of Health, Mason General Hospital (Public Hospital District No. 1), Public Hospital District No. 2, and the Mason County Sheriff's Department have developed a program offering a secure and environmentally responsible way for people to dispose of unwanted medication and prescription drugs. Tamper resistant collection boxes will be available outside the Sheriff's office at 322 N 3rd Street in Shelton, and at Mason County Fire District #2 at 460 NE Old Belfair Highway in Belfair beginning October 28, 2010 following the ribbon cutting.

"We want to offer the public an alternative to flushing unused drugs, which can end up in our drinking water supplies" said Lynda Ring Erickson, chair of the Board of Health. "The program provides the public a safe, convenient way to dispose of the medications that ensures the quality of our water for future generations by keeping discarded drugs out of our drinking water. The program addresses both a public health and a public safety issue. By having the drug take back boxes available for disposal of waste medications we are keeping drugs out of the hands of children, teens and drug abusers."

The unwanted medication and prescription drugs will be collected from both sites and disposed of by Deputies from the Mason County Sheriff's Department following proper law enforcement procedures. "I am extremely pleased the Sheriff's Office has been able to assist with the implementation of this program. Having a place to dispose of unwanted pharmaceuticals will make our community safer and help keep our environment clean" Sheriff Casey Salisbury said.

The program is made possible by the donations of the collection boxes by Public Hospital District #1 for the Shelton box and Public Hospital District No. 2 for the Belfair box. Mason County Public Health supplied the decals, locks and incineration boxes for the project. Mason County Fire District # 2 supplied the location for the Belfair box and the Mason County Sheriff's office

supplied the location for the box in Shelton and will be picking up the unwanted prescription drugs and medications and disposing of them according to their protocols. The Mason County Facilities and Grounds crew installed the boxes as their support of the effort.

“This is truly a collaborative effort that started with an idea from a citizen and grew from there” said Vicki Kirkpatrick, Public Health Director. “We would like to thank the Board of Health, including the ex-officio members, and our Health Officer Dr. Diana T. Yu for their support and guidance through the process. We would also like to thank the community for their ideas and suggestions that made the Unwanted Medication and Prescription Drug project a reality.”

For more information, call Vicki Kirkpatrick at 360-427-9670, Ext. 260; 360-275-6667, Ext. 260 in Belfair; or 360-482-5269, Ext. 260 in Elma.

Ross Gallagher
Chair

Lynda Ring Erickson
Commissioner

Tim Sheldon
Commissioner