

## Dropping off pills by the grocery bag

Gene Baker used to flush unwanted medication down the toilet.

"That's not a good idea because all that goes into the water table," he said.

Baker, of Madison Township, took part in Saturday's National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. The local drop-off point was the Richland County Solid Waste Management Authority. A similar event was held in April.

About midway through Saturday's collection, 43 people had dropped off medication.

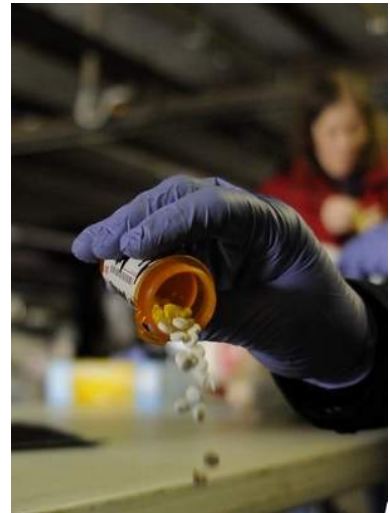
"That might not sound like a lot, but they've brought in grocery bags," said Ken Bender, executive director of the solid waste management authority.

"We've gotten a lot of pills."

City police Lt. John Wendling donned rubber gloves to go through the submitted medication. He was looking for liquids and needles.

"We (also) make sure people's names aren't on the prescription bottles," Wendling said.

Wendling didn't know what to make of a bottle of Liquid Hoodia, from South Africa.



Leftover prescription or over-the-counter medicines were collected Saturday at the Richland County Solid Waste Management Authority.

"It says they're voodoo pills," he said.

Liquid Hoodia actually is an appetite suppressant.

Wendling took note of a Fentanyl submission.

"That's a big-time narcotic," he said. "I'll put that off to the side."

METRICH Commander Lt. Ken Coontz said the drug enforcement unit partnered with the solid waste management authority, MedCentral/Mansfield Hospital and the Mansfield/Ontario/Richland County Health Department.

"Between the agencies, they were really able to get the word out there," Coontz said.

"People are recognizing the importance of disposing of these drugs properly rather than just letting them sit around."

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