



For Immediate Release
October 1, 2015

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SANTA CLARA COUNTY RECEIVES EIGHT NEW MEDICATION DISPOSAL BINS TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH

“DON'T RUSH TO FLUSH” MEDICATION COLLECTION PROGRAM EXPANDS IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY THANKS TO SAFE, CLEAN WATER GRANT

(San José, CA) – Residents of Santa Clara County will have more options for the safe and convenient disposal of medicines as the result of \$206,000 in funding from the Santa Clara Valley Water District as well as the project partners providing a project match of 25% for a total project costs/value of \$276,000.

Eight new medication collection bins are the first of 50 to be installed throughout the county in strategic locations to increase the convenience for residents and enhance environmental protection.

SCVWD funding supports the project partnership with the County of Santa Clara, City of San José, and the California Product Stewardship Council.

The addition of the new bins brings the existing network up to 27 total disposal locations. This includes eight in San José, seven in Sunnyvale, four in Palo Alto, two in Mountain View and one each in Cupertino, Los Altos, Santa Clara, Milpitas, San Martin and Gilroy.

This program is part of CPSC's award winning “Don't Rush to Flush” campaign that launched in 2013. The campaign was developed to encourage residents to stop flushing unwanted medications and to instead safely dispose in the collection bins.

“These new bins will help bridge the gap until Santa Clara County's Safe Drug Disposal Ordinance can be fully implemented,” said Gary Kreman, Santa Clara Valley Water District Board Chair. The grant was funded before the ordinance passed specifically to protect precious water resources. “We are taking decisive action to hold pharmaceutical manufacturers accountable for the safe disposal of over-the-counter and prescription drugs in Santa Clara County,” said President Dave Cortese, County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors. “The new ordinance requiring manufacturer responsibility will make it easier for residents to safely dispose of these medications, helping to reduce risks to health.”



Photo courtesy of the City of Palo Alto

The need for safe medication disposal options has never been greater. According to the [Kaiser Family Foundation](#) in 2014 over \$29.7 billion worth of prescription drugs were filled at pharmacies in California. Based on Santa Clara County's population, local residents spent nearly \$1.45 billion. The PH:ARM Pilot [report](#) estimated that up to one-third of prescribed medicines are not consumed and need to be disposed safely.

"The availability of these drop-off locations provides a safe and convenient way for residents to dispose of medications," said Kerrie Romanow, San José Environmental Services Director. "Preventing medications from being flushed or stored in the home is essential to help protect water quality and public health."

"Special thanks goes to the Santa Clara Valley Water District for funding the grant and the law enforcement agencies of the cities of Mountain View, Palo Alto and Sunnyvale for hosting bins. By using the bins, Santa Clara County residents are helping keep medications off the streets and out of the waterways," said Christine Flowers, Program Manager of the California Product Stewardship Council. "We still need 42 more bin host locations and encourage all interested medical and veterinary clinics, hospitals and pharmacies to contact us if they are interested in hosting a bin. Please contact CPSC at (916) 706-3420 or visit www.dontrushtoflush.org for more information." For a listing of existing medication collection bins in Santa Clara County visit www.hhw.org/medicines.

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The Santa Clara Valley Water District manages an integrated water resources system that includes the supply of clean, safe water, flood protection and stewardship of streams on behalf of Santa Clara County's nearly 1.9 million residents. The district effectively manages 10 dams and surface water reservoirs, three water treatment plants, an advanced recycled water purification center, a state-of-the-art water quality laboratory, nearly 400 acres of groundwater recharge ponds and more than 275 miles of streams. We provide wholesale water and groundwater management services to local municipalities and private water retailers who deliver drinking water directly to homes and businesses in Santa Clara County.

The County of Santa Clara Recycling and Waste Reduction Commission provides leadership for countywide planning and works to assure the success of countywide cooperative programs to reduce, reuse, and recycle materials that otherwise would be disposed of in landfills. The ten-member commission serves as the principal advisory body to city and town councils and the Board of Supervisors of Santa Clara County on countywide solid waste planning issues. The Commission also has state-mandated responsibilities, such as review and oversight of the Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan and Siting Element, local Source Reduction and Recycling Elements, Household Hazardous Waste Elements, and Non-disposal Facility Elements.

About San José Environmental Services Department (ESD) and San José Green Vision

San José, Capital of Silicon Valley, is the largest city in Northern California and the 10th largest city in the nation. The San José Environmental Services Department (www.sjenvironment.org) manages garbage and recycling services; watershed protection and pollution prevention; municipal drinking water and recycled water; community sustainability initiatives; and the San José-Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility. ESD's programs and initiatives align with the San José Green Vision (www.sjenvironment.org/greenvision), a long-term plan to create a sustainable future for our community. Follow us on Facebook: [SJEnvironment](#), Twitter: [@SJEnvironment](#), Instagram: [@SJEnvironment](#).

Notifications: Receive news, events, and announcements at Notify Me (www.sanjoseca.gov/list.aspx); select keyword Environment and choose from the topics list.

California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC) educates both the public and private sectors about

Product Stewardship and closely partners with business, jurisdictions, waste and recycling companies, manufacturers and others to promote and encourage sustainable practices and to recognize those companies who are taking a leadership role in participating in waste reduction. For more information, please go to: www.CalPSC.org.