



For San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties

Central Coast Commission for Senior Citizens

528 South Broadway
Santa Maria, CA 93454-5109
(805) 925-9554 - Telephone
(805) 925-9555 - Facsimile
e-mail - seniors@kcbx.net
Home page: www.centralcoastseniors.org

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May 18, 2015

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
105 East Anapamu St.
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Safe Drug Disposal proposal

Dear Board members:

The Advisory Council of the Central Coast Commission for Senior Citizens, Area Agency on Aging, voted at its May 8, 2015 meeting to support the development of an expanded Safe Drug Disposal program. This includes support of the recommended action at the May 19, 2015 meeting of the County Board of Supervisors to initiate a community process to develop a recommendation for such a program.

As you know, this Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council is an advocate on behalf of the senior citizens of this County. In that capacity, we review and consider proposals that may impact older persons. This proposal will have a positive effect on our senior citizen population. As a whole, this population takes a large amount of both prescribed and OTC drugs.

And, we find that our medicine cabinets are full. We need a convenient way to dispose of this accumulation of drugs. And, too many of us 'flush' away our unused pills, causing water quality issues. Or we don't dispose of them at all and then 'self-medicate' or share our pills.

Operation Medicine Cabinet is a successful program within its limitations. At recent Senior Expos it was very popular. We need a more convenient outlet for the unused drugs in the medicine cabinet of over 79,000 senior citizens in Santa Barbara County (DOF population data 2013). Certainly, returning unused drugs to the pharmacy will meet the goal of convenience. This is especially true if the drugs can be from any type of purchase, such as mail order.

You may know that this Area Agency on Aging partners with local agencies and sponsors a Vial of Life program. This Vial of Life container includes appropriate information cards and we would be happy to include an information card regarding convenient, correct and safe drug disposal. To date we have distributed over 150,000 Vials of Life in this two county region. And, the need continues as people age and more people retire to this area.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for the development of a Safe Drug Disposal program that is convenient to senior consumers and effective.

Sincerely,

Amy Mallett, Chair
AAA Advisory Council