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Press Release

Chief Wells and District Attorney Morrissey Talk drug safety at Senior Center event

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Police Chief Richard G. Wells, Jr. and Norfolk District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey were at the Senior Center Friday morning asking seniors for their help in combatting the opiate addiction epidemic that has overspread this region.

"We know that a large proportion of heroin addicts first experienced opiates by taking a prescription pain pill out of the medicine cabinet of a friend or family member," District Attorney Morrissey said. "We are asking everyone, not just seniors, to clear out unneeded medicines – particularly pain medications and psychotropic drugs – from their medicine cabinets."

Milton was one of the first five towns in Norfolk County to offer a 24-hour, 365-day prescription drug collection container at the police station. DA Morrissey was so impressed with the success of those towns that he offered grants and assistance to place the containers in every police department in the county that could accommodate them.

"Many seniors want to get rid of those drugs, but know that flushing them down the toilet is no longer recommended because it eventually pollutes groundwater," Morrissey said. "Some hold on to the drugs without giving it much thought, or because they were raised to hate waste."

But even those who would never misuse the drugs personally are urged to clear them out of the house once the need for them has passed. "Every time a visitor to your home uses the bathroom, they are behind a closed door with your medications. We have seen real estate agents take drugs from open houses. It is not a great leap to see someone called in to do work helping themselves," Morrissey said. "But most seniors would be sick at the thought that their medicines could be stolen for sale on the street or to feed someone's addiction."

Pharmacist David Morgan, who works as a consultant in Morrissey's office, encouraged the seniors to also consider what they really need before filling their prescriptions. "If a practitioner writes a prescription for a large quantity of a strong pain medication and you think you may need less, you can request a smaller amount from the pharmacy or the prescriber," he said.

District Attorney Morrissey praised Chief Wells and the Milton Police Department for reinforcing their aggressive drug enforcement efforts with education and prevention work like Friday's event. "We cannot arrest our way out of the opiate epidemic. The more that law enforcement works with citizens to stop addictions from developing, the more successful we will be."

Anyone with prescription drugs they no longer need or want is urged to bring them to the Milton Police Department headquarters on Highland Street. The disposal kiosk is self-serve, no questions asked, no paperwork to fill out. "It is literally as simple as mailing a letter," Morrissey said.

Environmentally responsible destruction of the drugs is done pro bono by Covanta Energy.