

# Not All Drug Disposal Laws Are Equal The Dangers of In-Home Drug Disposal Products

## What's the problem?

Some states are considering legislation that supports in-home drug disposal methods as a first choice instead of a last resort. As of 2018, one state has already [passed a law](#) requiring pharmacists to sell and promote such products. Other states may follow.

## What are the dangers?

Manufacturers of in-home disposal products claim that, when used according to instructions, special chemicals inside their products “neutralize” drugs and the resulting mixture is safe to put in the household trash. However:

- There is little independent data on whether these products meet the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration’s “non-retrievable” standard for destruction and how they perform under different conditions of human use.
- They cost 10 times more per pound of drugs disposed than drug take-back programs.
- They place the onus on the consumer to pay, an unfair burden that can be cost prohibitive to patients and low-income households.
- They create unrecyclable packaging waste, and any persisting chemicals can leach from landfills into groundwater.

**What we want:** In-home drug disposal products should be independently tested in a variety of scenarios, including those where a consumer does not use the product according to instructions. Test results should be made freely available. If proven safe, PSI and our members would support them.

## For more information:

- [Best practices for safe drug disposal](#)
- [PSI’s webpage on drug stewardship](#)
- [PSI’s Safe Drug Disposal Portal](#)
- [“Overview of Eight Medicine Disposal Products”](#) April 2017, prepared by Community Environmental Health Strategies LLC for San Francisco Department of the Environment

## Drug Take-Back is Best!

Safe and convenient disposal of leftover household medication is crucial to protect public and environmental health.

Drug take-back programs—kiosks, mail-back envelopes, and one-day events—are the only method supported by PSI and our government members at this time. In-home drug disposal products have not been proven safe or effective.



*Drug take-back at Basset Medical Center in Cooperstown, NY, during a PSI-designed pilot program.*