Over the counter and prescription medications should not be flushed down the drain or toilet because wastewater treatment does not remove pharmaceutical compounds. Flushed chemicals may end up in local waterways, and eventually make their way into drinking water supplies.

Properly disposal of unwanted and expired prescriptions and over-the-counter medications promotes a healthy aquatic environment and prevents accidental poisoning and intentional abuse.

Local police stations conduct “Take Back” days for unused medications every few months. The next one is April 28, 2012. Lakewood does not participate but Brick, Howell, Jackson and many other local townships do.

If you can’t make the next “Take Back Day”, environmental groups ask you to follow the following protocols for disposal:

- Pour medication into a sealable plastic bag or container. If medication is a solid (pill, liquid capsule, etc.), add water to dissolve it.
- Add kitty litter, sawdust, coffee grounds (or any material that mixes with the medication and makes it less appealing for pets and children to eat) to the plastic bag or container.
- Seal the plastic bag or container and put it in the trash.
- Remove and destroy ALL identifying personal information (prescription label) from all medication containers before recycling them or throwing them away.