

Islanders drop off unwanted prescriptions

■ 46 Island sites take drugs with no questions asked

■ DEA-sponsored program collected 121 tons last year

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Rose Borda walked into the Port Washington Police District headquarters yesterday clutching a plastic bag of aspirin, antibiotics and pain medication.

One by one, she dropped the items into a cardboard box as a federal agent looked on.

"I don't want this medicine around my house," said Borda, of Port Washington. "I have a 2½-year-old son."

Across Long Island and the nation yesterday, similar scenes played out in more than 5,300 hospital lobbies, police departments and fire houses as part of the Drug Enforcement Administration's National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day.

It was a no-questions-asked, anonymous way for people to dispose of unwanted drugs.

In Nassau and Suffolk, residents had the pick of 46 locations to drop off their drugs, DEA Special Agent Erin Mulvey said.

A steady stream of people went to the Port Washington police headquarters, including one person who had two garbage

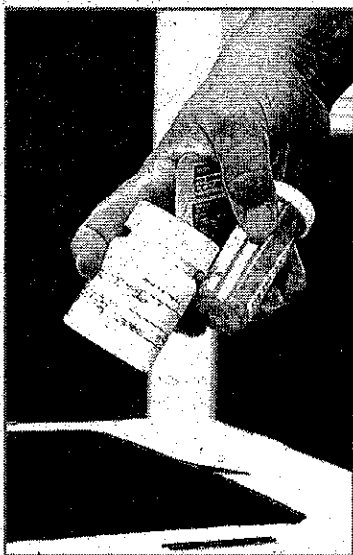


PHOTO BY JOHN DUNN

Vials of unwanted medicines are left at the Port Washington Police Department yesterday.

turned over expired allergy and cough medicine, and even pills her dog had taken. "They should do it pretty often."

Last year, during the first Take-Back day, Americans turned in prescription drugs weighing more than 242,000 pounds, the equivalent of 40 H3 Hummers.

Unused medicines are susceptible to misuse and abuse, the DEA said. More Americans abuse prescription drugs than the number of those using cocaine, hallucinogens and heroin combined, according to the 2009 National Survey