

**EXPIRED OR UNNEEDED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS DON'T DUMP THEM DOWN THE DRAIN OR TOILET**

TRADITIONALLY, EXPIRED OR unwanted prescriptions and over-the-counter medications have been flushed down the toilet or drain. Although this method of disposal prevents immediate accidental ingestion, it can pollute wastewater, causing adverse effects to fish and other aquatic wildlife.

The U.S. Geologic Survey has confirmed the presence of pharmaceuticals in the environment and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has compiled information on potential environmental impacts. Studies are also being conducted on the potential harmful effect to human health.

**PLACING MEDICATIONS IN THE TRASH IS THE PREFERRED DISPOSAL METHOD**

Follow these tips:

- Keep pharmaceuticals in their original container since labels may contain safety



information. Remove your name from the label for privacy concerns.

- To discourage unintended use, add a small amount of water to solid drugs or absorbent material, such as kitty litter, sawdust or flour, to liquid drugs.



- Enclose contained drugs in a small bag or other waste container to prevent glass



containers from breaking and to hinder others from taking medication from the trash.

- Work with your health care provider on proper disposal of chemotherapy drugs that may require special handling.

For information, see "Medicines" under the A - Z How-To-Get-Rid-Of-It Guide at [www.hennepin.us](http://www.hennepin.us).

Sources: Hennepin County and Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance.

*Earth Action Heroes protect the earth. Whether it's saving energy or guarding Bloomington's precious natural resources, these individuals are making a difference. Here are your neighbors in action ...*

**EARTH ACTION HERO COMPANIES TO CLASSROOMS**

WHILE USING A PAIR OF BROKEN SCISSORS at her daughter's elementary school, Cary Weatherby wondered if she could do something to help with the school's lack of supplies. The answer came in a phone call from her husband's work assistant. There were thousands of file stickers the company was going to toss and she wanted to know if the school's kindergarten teacher could use them. The teacher was thrilled.

Companies to Classrooms, a non-profit organization located near the intersection of France Avenue and Old Shakopee Road, provides free educational supplies to Bloomington teachers from companies that no longer need them.

"It's a win-win concept," Weatherby said. "Rather than paying to haul them to the landfill, companies have a convenient, cost-effective way to recycle



excess or outdated supplies, and teachers love it."

Teachers spend a lot of their own money trying to supply classrooms and students, who are in need of assistance, with materials. Indian Mounds first grade teacher Jessica Wagener said the store has a variety of items, some of which would never have fit into her budget.

"My class wanted a book binding machine, but it was close to \$1,000," Wagener said. "I picked up one here for free. We probably never would have bought it."

Beth Daly, also an Indian Mounds teacher, had her class write thank-you letters to businesses.

"We wanted to get the word out that the items were greatly appreciated and that their donations don't go unnoticed," she said.

Open since last March, Weatherby said she is hoping to distribute \$100,000 worth of items in the first year. So far,

Indian Mounds first grade teachers Beth Daly and Jessica Wagener shop for supplies.



\$40,000 in supplies to teachers has gone out the door.

Companies to Classrooms relies on volunteers and donated equipment to operate. For more information, call 952-888-7708.



**BLOOMINGTON CARES ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT**

**PLANTING THE SEEDS**

**WHILE ENHANCING CAMPUS, STUDENTS LEARN TO RESPECT NATURE**



"Benches and birdhouses installed around the pond create a lovely environment for people of all ages to enjoy."

According to Olson Elementary Principal Timothy Case, the kids were excited to get their hands dirty.

"The kids worked hard and it was a great opportunity for them to learn about respecting and appreciating our natural environment," Case said. "It was really neat to see all of the organizations come together for this event."

A PARTNERSHIP BLOOMED LAST MAY AS teachers, parents, Toro Company, Minnesota Valley Country Club, Tree Trust, the City of Bloomington and around 950 elementary and middle school students took on a project to enhance their community. The project included restoration of a chip path, installation of benches, landscaping, and planting trees and shrubs at various locations around Olson School along 102nd Street and Johnson Road.

Part of a two-year plan to improve the Olson campus, the project also makes the area more inviting to the neighborhood.

"An existing walking trail around the wetland was extended to public property," Toro's Judson Tharin said.

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