SANTA BARBARA COUNTY RECEIVES OUTSTANDING POLICY AWARD FOR SAFE DRUG DISPOSAL PROGRAM

(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.) -- Santa Barbara County’s Safe Drug Disposal Program has received an Outstanding Policy/Legislative Advancement Award from the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle). The award recognizes the County’s collaborative work with five other counties to advance Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policy for unwanted household medications.

Santa Barbara County passed a Safe Drug Disposal EPR ordinance in June 2016 that requires pharmaceutical manufacturers to fund and operate a convenient collection program for unwanted medications. Third District Supervisor Doreen Farr championed the policy at the Board of Supervisors and commented, “The new program is critically important because it protects public health and helps to reduce the risk of misuse of dangerous pharmaceuticals by providing easy and safe collection bins for residents.”

The award was also presented to the counties of Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz. The six counties worked closely together on the development of the ordinance and continue to collaborate closely on implementation. The award noted that the collaboration produced a consistent face to the [pharmaceutical] industry and allowed each county to support each other through the often difficult navigation with industry participants, and “collectively accomplished a milestone in cooperation and collaboration.”

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The County’s Public Health Department is overseeing the implementation of the ordinance. The new manufacturer-run program is expected to be operational by mid-2017 and expand the number of collection sites available to the public, as well as transfer costs from County Sheriff Department and the general public to producers and manufacturers. The County is currently pursuing partnerships with local pharmacies in order to provide residents with a variety of convenient collection locations. Limited collection receptacles are currently available at eight Sheriff substations located throughout the county.

For information, visit www.LessIsMore.org/meds.

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