

September 14, 2009

**Aquarion Water Company, St. Vincent's Medical Center
team up for first public pharmaceutical collection
in the Trumbull/Monroe Health District**

Trumbull and Monroe residents will be able to discard the expired and unused medications in their medicine cabinets when Aquarion Water Company and St. Vincent's Medical Center, with support from Environmental Management, Inc. (EMI), conduct this area's first pharmaceutical collection, "Safe and Sound", Saturday, Oct. 17, 2009, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at Daniels Farm School, 710 Daniels Farm Road, Trumbull.

The event will take place in cooperation with the towns of Trumbull and Monroe, and the Trumbull/Monroe Health District. Its purpose is to provide a safe means of disposal for old pharmaceuticals — prescription and over-the-counter medications, whether in pill or liquid form. Doing so prevents the medications from entering the environment or getting into the hands of young children or teens.

Both causes are important to Charles V. Firlotte, President and CEO of Aquarion, and Susan Davis, RN, EdD, President and CEO of St. Vincent's. In a joint statement, they expressed the urgency behind "Safe and Sound".

"In the past few years, we have become increasingly aware that discarded medications are creating concerns across the nation, because they are finding their way into the environment," Firlotte and Davis stated. "Though Connecticut laws put safeguards in place to help prevent such contamination from entering public water supply sources, traces of medications flushed through sanitary systems can still make their way into Long Island Sound or may contribute to future groundwater contamination.

"In addition, more and more teens are endangering their health and their lives with 'pharm parties,' at which they consume handfuls of pills taken from parents' medicine cabinets, with no regard for what effect the dosages might have or how the drugs might interact," Firlotte stated. "Young children also are at risk from left-over medications, which they could mistake for candy or juice. These situations can be lethal, and parents should be aware of the danger in their home when these pills are left where their children can find them.

Firlotte and Davis expressed their thanks to those involved in the event. "We are grateful for the assistance of event supporter Environmental Management, Inc., under the leadership of Jill Tuchman, which will handle the safe disposal of the non-controlled substances we collect," they stated. "The first selectmen of Trumbull and Monroe, Raymond G. Baldwin

and Thomas Buzi, also are working closely with us, along with Trumbull/Monroe Health Director Patrice Sulik, to coordinate the event for the residents of their two communities.”

The planning committee for “Safe and Sound” is led by Karen Scinto, Director of Pharmacy at St. Vincent’s, and Len DeJong, Aquarion’s Manager of Watershed & Environmental Management. Scinto has arranged for registered pharmacists to participate in the event, since state law allows only pharmacists to handle disposal of prescription medications in such circumstances. The committee also is coordinating a volunteer force from Aquarion and St. Vincent’s to work at the school that day, ensuring the collection proceeds smoothly. Police officers from both towns also will be on hand for traffic control.

In addition, a state drug control agent will monitor the collection process and oversee disposal of all prescription drugs.

“Safe and Sound” is for disposal of prescription and over-the-counter medications only. Scinto and DeJong stated that the volunteers will not accept illicit/street drugs; chemicals (including mercury), sharps/needles or other medical paraphernalia.

Personal identification on any medications should be removed or blacked out. Residents will not be asked to identify themselves during the collection process.

Anyone with questions can call 445-7339.

Aquarion Water Company, based in Bridgeport, serves nearly 580,000 people in 36 Connecticut communities, including Trumbull and Monroe. It is among the seven largest investor-owned water utility companies in the U.S., and the largest in New England.

St. Vincent’s Medical Center, also based in Bridgeport, is a 473-bed community and teaching hospital with ancillary facilities and clinics in neighboring towns. It has earned national and regional recognitions for its cardiac expertise, compassionate staff and commitment to patient satisfaction.

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