

Contact: John Hopper
Phone: (201) 265-2100, Ext. 755

February 16, 2010

PRESS RELEASE

Board of Health Observes Poison Prevention Week

In 2010 National Poison Prevention Week will be celebrated March 14th through the 20th, and draws attention to the fact that more than a million accidental poisonings occur in the United States each year. Only a small number of these result in fatalities, but sadly the majority involve children under the age of five, occur in the kitchen and are preventable by following some simple rules.

Potentially harmful products should always be stored in their original containers, which contain first aid information useful in the event of an accidental swallowing. Many harmful products, such as bleach, cleaning agents and disinfectants come in safety packaging, which prevents small children from accidentally opening the containers and swallowing the contents, thus burning their esophagus with a caustic agent in the process. Harmful products need to be stored away from food and out of reach of children, or in cabinets that have been locked and child-proofed. The most deadly poisons, like rat poisons, insect and weed killers always need to be stored in a locked cabinet in the basement or garage.

In the bathroom too, medications need to be in child-proof containers. Never call medicine “candy”, and discard all out-of-date medications. Leave medications in their original containers with the original prescription number on the label. That will help a pharmacist to quickly identify the medication in an emergency and locate an antidote. Never leave colorful medications where children can find them, use the proper size spoon or cup for liquid medication and never give medications in the dark.

If an accidental poisoning happens despite your best safety efforts, you must act quickly. Call your family doctor and the New Jersey Poison Information and Education hot line immediately. The toll free number is 1-800-222-1222 and should be displayed prominently near your telephone. The Poison Control Center is able to give specific information on a wide variety of substances and can be of great help in any accidental poisoning. The New Jersey Poison Control Center answers more than 100,000 phone calls related to poison exposures each year.

Over the counter diet pills are another source of concern. With a large portion of the United States population overweight, many people continue to look for the quick fix instead of changing their eating and exercise habits, making diet drugs now a multi-billion dollar industry. Reports of adverse effects range from dizziness and high blood pressure to seizures, stroke, liver damage and even death. The New Jersey Poison Control Center can be contacted for information concerning overdoses of diet pills.

Board of Health member Colleen Amaro states that poison control literature and pamphlets will be available at both libraries and Borough Hall during Poison Prevention Week. For a Home Poison Prevention Checklist to evaluate the safety of your home, call the Board of Health nurses at 201-265-2100, Extension 615 or 618.

cc: Mayor Tedesco
Councilwoman M. O'Brien
Toni Falato, Borough Clerk
Board
P. Opitz, RN
J. Fraioli, RN.
M. Baldonado, RN
TOWN NEWS
COUNTY SEAT

Community Bulletin Board (TCI)
Elks Lodge No. 2001
Woman's Club of Paramus
Paramus Senior Center
Republican Club
Paramus Rotary, PM
Paramus Public Library
Fire Co's
Lisa Kwon, WMBC-TV
Democratic Club