



## News from the Office of ERIE COUNTY EXECUTIVE MARK POLONCARZ

### NEWS RELEASE

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### **POLONCARZ, BURSTEIN, HOWARD UNVEIL ESAP KIOSKS**

*Expanded Syringe Access Program Allows for Safe Disposal of Needles, Lancets, Medical Wastes*

**ERIE COUNTY, NY—** Today, Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz was joined by Health Commissioner Dr. Gale Burstein, members of the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning (“ECDEP”), and Erie County Sheriff Timothy Howard at Erie Community College’s (“ECC”) City campus to unveil the new ESAP (“Expanded Syringe Access Program”) dual needle/medical waste and drug disposal kiosks at the College. 11 new dual kiosk sites are now available in Erie County, funded through a grant administered by the Erie County Department of Health (“ECDOH”) and maintained by the Sheriff’s office.

“Needles and sharps should be treated with the utmost caution in order to prevent unnecessary exposures,” **said Poloncarz.** “Also, no one should flush medications down the toilet, thereby contaminating our drinking water supply, or leave them in their medicine cabinet where they could be stolen. These [kiosks](#) provide a safe way for residents to dispose of these potentially dangerous items in a way that’s conscientious, responsible, and effective. I would like to thank the partners in this project for creating a program to dispose of these items in a safe and efficient manner.”

The ECDOH, ECDEP and Sheriff’s office collaborate on the ESAP project, with ECDOH receiving funding from the New York State Department of Health (“NYSDOH”) to purchase the kiosks and the “sharps” containers that go inside them. ECDOH registers the needle disposal units, provides the kiosks and supporting supplies, and handles sharps disposal after the Sheriff’s department empties the kiosks. The Sheriff’s department maintains each kiosk, including handling and destroying the drugs according to policy, while bringing medical wastes from needle kiosks to ECDOH for disposal. ECDEP facilitates applications to the New York Department of Environment & Conservation (“DEC”) and the Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement (“BNE”) for drug disposal sites and to coordinate a mechanism for incineration of the retrieved drugs on a routine basis.

**Health Commissioner Burstein added,** “Residents now have a mechanism to dispose of unwanted medications when they need to, rather than let them accumulate in the home where they can lead to problems. Additionally, these kiosks will aid immensely by taking used needles, which are a danger to all, and safely disposing of them. This will lead to better health for all.”

“These kiosks allow citizens to dispose of their unused and unwanted drugs on a regular basis, thereby preventing the meds from being abused by potentially falling into the hands of an addict or the wrong person,” **said Erie County Sheriff Tim Howard.** “Our Narcotics Unit knows all too well the damage abused prescription drugs cause.”

**For more information:**

On the Erie County Department of Health and ESAP, visit

<http://www2.erie.gov/health/index.php?q=needle-disposal-amp-access>

On the Erie County Department of Environment & Planning, visit

<http://www2.erie.gov/environment/>

On the Erie County Sheriff's office, visit

<http://www2.erie.gov/sheriff/>

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