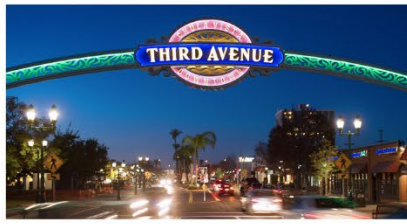


# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Keeping the community connected to information, programs, and services.



## City Manager Message



Greetings,

Spring is here, and I am happy to share exciting updates on key projects that will shape Chula Vista's future.

We recently broke ground on two major initiatives. The [Heritage Road Bridge Replacement Project](#) will upgrade the temporary structure built in 1994, transforming it into a wider, six-lane bridge between Main Street and Entertainment Circle North. The project also includes widening Main Street with an additional eastbound lane and adding bike paths, pedestrian walkways, and a new traffic signal—improving access to Live Nation's North Island Credit Union Amphitheatre and Sesame Place San Diego.

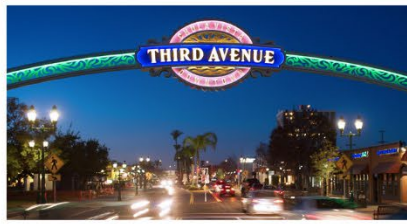
We've also launched the much-anticipated [Eucalyptus Park Renovations Project](#), revitalizing the city's first and oldest park, originally opened in 1927. This 20-acre community space is undergoing a \$17.7 million transformation, introducing exciting new amenities such as pickleball courts, a skate plaza, a bike park, and an interactive water feature. Funded by the 2018 Parks Bond Act, Measure P, and the City's Capital Improvement Program, this investment will ensure Eucalyptus Park remains a vibrant hub for recreation and community gatherings.

April is Earth Month—come celebrate with us at [South Bay Earth Day](#) on April 12 at Bayfront Park! This zero-waste event features hands-on activities, live entertainment, and a Fix-it Clinic. Learn more in this month's edition!

Finally, budget season is here. Join our Community Budget Presentations for FY 2025-26 on April 7 at Norman Park Senior Center, April 16 at Otay Ranch Library Hub, and April 23 at Civic Center Library. These meetings are a great opportunity to learn about the

proposed budget, ask questions, and share your funding priorities. [Visit our website](#) to learn more.

For daily updates on all things happening in Chula Vista, be sure to follow us on social media @ThinkChulaVista. We hope you enjoy this month's edition!



## South Bay Earth Day Coming April 12



The City will be kicking off the annual South Bay Earth Day on Saturday, April 12, 2025, from 12 – 4 p.m. at Bayfront Park, 980 Marina Way! The event will offer earth-friendly fun and engagement through activities, education, and a variety of vendors.

The event will include live entertainment from One Drop Redemption; a tribute band to Bob Marley & The Wailers; a Fix-it Clinic, tie-dye workshop, food trucks, kids

games, and much more! All activities are designed to promote environmentally sustainable education. More than 50 “green” vendors will also be displaying sustainable and eco-conscious items for purchase. Participants can also view unique and environmentally inspired art pieces and exhibits, with multiple live-painters on-site. Free bike valet will be available at a bike-only valet.

South Bay Earth Day has been enjoyed in the City since 2018. For more information, please visit the event [webpage](#).



## Making Progress on Big Projects

Big things are happening in Chula Vista! Read below for updates on two major renovation projects in the City.

### Heritage Road Bridge



On March 4, 2025, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for the Heritage Road Bridge project. The Heritage Bridge construction project will replace the 30-year-old temporary bridge which was erected in 1994. The new bridge will be 450 ft. wide and will include new bike lanes, sidewalks, and a traffic signal. Heritage Road will also be widened from two to six lanes, between Main Street and Entertainment Circle North.

This project will also widen Main Street by adding a third eastbound traffic lane between Nirvana Avenue and Heritage Road.

For more information and to stay updated on this project, please visit the Heritage Road Replacement Project [webpage](#).

## Eucalyptus Park



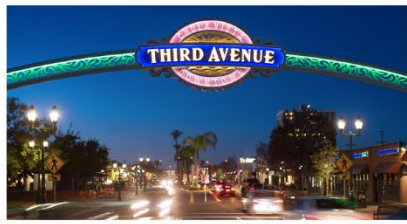
The City's first and oldest park will soon have a major upgrade! On March 21, 2025, a groundbreaking ceremony was held to kickoff the upcoming renovations coming to the park.

Renovations will include upgrades to the already existing park facilities, installations of new recreation features including: pickleball courts, a bike park, and skate plaza, and a water feature.

Eucalyptus Park first opened in 1927 and is located at 436 C Street, stretching from 5<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> Ave.

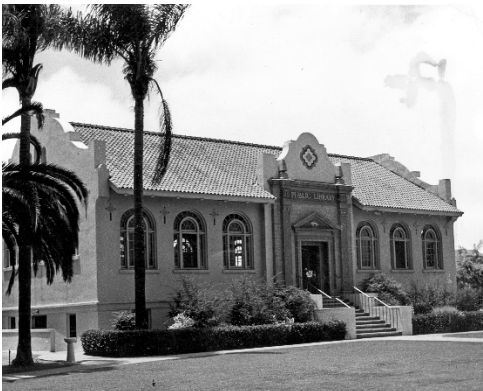
The \$17.7 million project is being funded in part by a \$7.1 million grant from the 2018 Parks Bond Act Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program, awarded in February 2022; Measure P sales tax dollars; and City Capital Improvement funding.

For more information and to stay updated on this project, please visit the Eucalyptus Park renovations [webpage](#).



## Celebrating Chula Vista's Libraries and Staff

April 6–12 is National Library Week, and we are spotlighting our city libraries and the amazing staff. Our Chula Vista Public Libraries are dedicated to building connections, promoting literacy, and engaging the community. All three branches offer innovative and inclusive programs, providing access to valuable resources and activities for all ages. Whether residents are exploring our extensive collection of books or participating in enriching programs, our libraries are friendly and safe spaces for everyone.

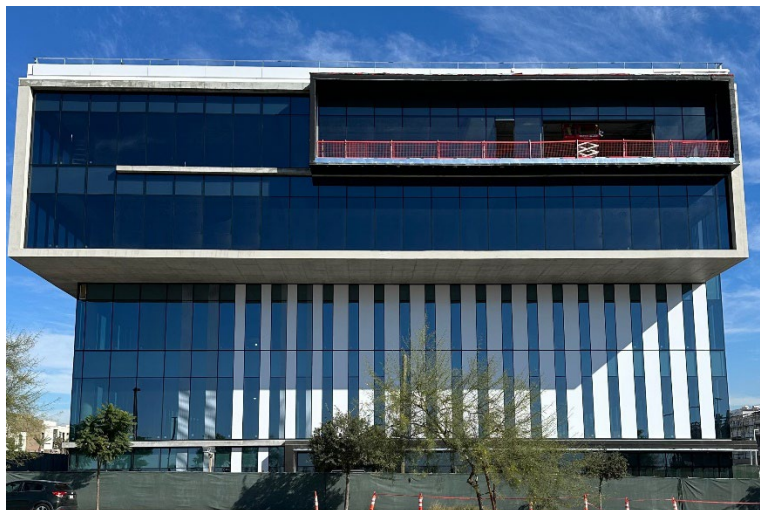


Chula Vista's library system has a rich history, dating back to 1891 when volunteers opened a small reading room that eventually transformed into a Carnegie library in 1916. Over the years, our libraries have grown and evolved, yet they have always remained at the heart of the community.

The Civic Center Library, built in 1976, is our largest branch, housing 185,000 volumes and welcoming over 600,000 visitors annually. The South Chula Vista Library, which opened in 1995, serves as a cornerstone of southwest Chula Vista, with 155,000 volumes. The Otay Ranch Library, opened in 2012, offers a more modern library experience, featuring 17,000 volumes and conveniently located inside the Otay Ranch Town Center. Thanks to a \$19.5 million grant, both the Civic Center and South branches will undergo exciting renovations to enhance their facilities and ensure they continue serving future generations.

We are eagerly anticipating the opening of the Millenia Library, a state-of-the-art facility that will redefine the library experience. Designed to be the "library of the future," Millenia Library will offer cutting-edge technology, dynamic and innovative community spaces, and endless opportunities for discovery and growth.

Beyond books, our libraries offer a [variety of programs and services](#), including passport services, public computers, Wi-Fi hotspots, and even a Seed Library where you can “borrow” seeds to grow your own plants. Our library system also oversees Cultural Arts programs, offers STEM activities, and hosts craft workshops and Storytime sessions, including special guest appearances from Animal Services. There’s something for everyone at our libraries.



We invite you to [explore our library branches](#) and connect with our dedicated staff and volunteers. Celebrate with us the power of libraries and the impact they have in shaping our community.





## Recognizing City Employees: Janelle Barraza and Mayra Estrada

As we kick off Earth Month this April, we are highlighting two dedicated employees from the Office of Sustainability!

Read below to learn about the City's Sustainability Department, and please visit the Sustainability [webpage](#) to learn more about the Department.

### Janelle Barraza, Conservation Specialist



Since starting as a Conservation Specialist in February 2023, Janelle Barraza's typical workday has included a variety of crucial tasks, all leading toward the implementation of the Building Energy Savings Ordinance. According to Barraza, this ordinance aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and lower energy bills by requiring large buildings (20k sq ft and greater) to report their energy use data and meet energy efficiency targets.

"I lead the implementation of the ordinance which involves developing resources to help owners comply with City regulations.," said Barraza. "These include facilitating 10 annual mailings, planning in-person and virtual trainings, developing and maintaining webpages and compliance resources, operating the help desk, creating outreach materials, collaborating with community partners and much more."

When she is not leading Building Energy Savings Ordinance BESO efforts, Barraza also manages the behind-the-scenes operations of her Division, assists

with Sustainability social media, web pages, and represents the Sustainability Team at various Sustainability events.

In addition to contributing to this effort, Barraza has also contributed greatly to several impactful projects. These include helping secure 10 million dollars in grant funding from the Department of Energy to support program implementation, upgrading the City from bronze-to-platinum-level of the SANDAG Diamond Awards program in one year, and leading the implementation of BESO Building Energy Savings Ordinance and increasing its compliance by 127% in two years.

“I am passionate about sustainability,” said Barraza. “I really enjoy leading projects that will not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but will spur job creation, lower energy bills, and improve air quality within the city.”

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### **Mayra Estrada, Recycling Specialist II**



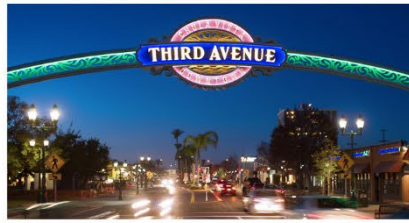
During her past two years with the City, Mayra Estrada has contributed immensely to the Environmental Services Division. A typical workday for Estrada includes data management, managing compliance records for [Senate Bill \(SB\) 1383](#), directing communication between City recycling specialists and Republic Services, assisting and leading with educational events for residents and businesses, enforcing [Municipal Codes 8.24 and 8.25](#)

“My favorite thing about this job is seeing the direct effect of our work in our community,” said Estrada. “In my outreach efforts I have provided education and

indoor containers for restaurants to comply with the food waste collection program required by SB 1383. One of the best feelings and what makes me feel fulfilled in this job is going back to see the hard work I have put in come to fruition. Being part of a roll-out of a new program that is helping combat climate change in the City I grew up in has been one of my biggest accomplishments.”

In addition to her typical duties, Estrada also works closely with local businesses and programs to help promote sustainability in their everyday practice. An example of this was when she supplied a Third Avenue business, Don Pedro Taco Shop, with indoor food waste containers. When she went to the taco shop for lunch a few weeks later, she was happy to see that the container was set up and in use, along with sustainable signage displayed for patrons to also see.

“It was very inspiring to see the shop using the container and signage that I provided for them,” said Estrada. “It gives me hope that we can make significant impact through the work we do at the local level. It was also a reminder that the work that we do is important and motivates me to continue the effort to make Chula Vista a leader in sustainability.”



## Highlighting Small Businesses: The Original Paw Pleasers

For more than three decades, The Original Paw Pleasers has been a unique destination for San Diego's pet lovers. Founded in 1992 by Loree Shirazi, what began as a pet-sitting business quickly transformed into the city's first dog and cat bakery, specializing in handmade cakes and cookies for pets. In October 2022, Paw Pleasers expanded to Chula Vista, located at 311 Third Ave.



With multiple locations in San Diego, Chula Vista's location features an on-site bakery, an array of ready-to-go treats, a boutique of unique toys, and high-quality pet food. Pet owners can also make appointments to use the self-wash pet tub or schedule a visit with an on-site groomer.

Recently, Paw Pleasers was selected for a special mural project by students from High Tech Middle School. The bakery was chosen as one of the few local businesses to receive a custom mural designed and painted by seventh-grade students under the guidance of their teacher, Mr. Van Straatum. The mural now serves as a vibrant selfie station inside the shop, showcasing the students' creativity and the strong sense of community that defines Chula Vista.

"We are incredibly grateful for the support of this community," said Shirazi. "The students' dedication and talent brought tears to our eyes. It was amazing to see their vision come to life."

Beyond providing delicious, pet-friendly treats, The Original Paw Pleasers is dedicated to giving back to the community. Over the years, the bakery has proudly supported Chula

Vista's Animal Services through various events and giving back to pets in search of their forever homes. The City is fortunate to have businesses like Paw Pleasers that care deeply about the well-being of local animals and the community.

To learn more about The Original Paw Pleasers and to see their hours of operation, please visit their website, and check out their [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages. For pet grooming appointments book online or by calling (619) 500-5676

If you would like your small business featured in a future newsletter, please complete this [submission form](#).

For business assistance, please refer to our [website](#) and be sure to refer to the Award-Winning [Business Resources Guide](#) for additional information on available resources to assist your business





## Spotlighting Community Partners: Republic Services



With a focus on innovation, circularity, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, Republic Services has been a trusted partner in keeping Chula Vista clean, green, and thriving. From waste collection to cutting-edge composting, they're more than just a service provider.

Republic Services is a leader in environmental services, providing comprehensive waste and recycling solutions across the country. With the mission of "Partnering with communities

to create a more sustainable world," Republic Services has been a proud partner of the City of Chula Vista for more than 20 years.

"At Republic Services, we believe sustainability starts at the local level," said Rick Rojas, Republic Services General Manager. "Our partnership with the City of Chula Vista is a perfect example of how we can work together to create cleaner neighborhoods, protect natural spaces, and invest in a greener future. We're proud to call this community home and excited about the future of waste and recycling."

Republic Services operates nationwide, but the company's roots in San Diego County run deep with more than 400 employees across the region, providing waste and recycling services to homes, businesses, and municipalities—including right here in Chula Vista.

Here are a few key ways Republic Services is making a difference in the community:

- **Otay Sustainability Park** – Home to the Otay Landfill and California’s first fully solar-powered composting facility, which will double its capacity this year to meet growing demand.
- **Electrifying the Fleet** – Republic Services has rolled out its first electric waste collection vehicles in Chula Vista, a game-changer for reducing emissions.
- **Community Cleanups** – Through the Neighborhood National Promise Program, a \$250,000 grant was provided for the Otay River Valley restoration, supporting cleanups, invasive species removal, and habitat restoration.

Community engagement is a large aspect of the company’s core. Programs designed to strengthen the community include free compost giveaways, landfill and recycling facility tours, educational seminars, student scholarships, and momentary support for community investment projects, and local partnerships.

To learn more about Republic Services, please visit their [website](#).



## Proposed City Budget Community Presentations

The City of Chula Vista will present a preliminary draft of the City Manager's Fiscal Year 2025-26 Proposed Budget at community budget presentations on April 7, 16, and 23. The public is invited to learn about and provide input on the preliminary budget, which serves as a financial plan, operations guide and policy document for City programs and services.

- Monday, April 7, 6 p.m. - Norman Park Senior Center (270 F St)
- Wednesday, April 16, 5:30 p.m. - Otay Ranch Library (The Hub: 2015 Birch Rd. Suite 407)
- Wednesday, April 23, 6 p.m. - Civic Center Library (365 F St)

City staff will then present the City Manager's Proposed Budget to the Chula Vista City Council on Tuesday, May 6. Following that meeting, the budget will be available online on the City's Budget [webpage](#).

The City operates on a fiscal year calendar from July 1 through June 30. Each year, the City Manager is required to present the City Council with a balanced General Fund budget, meaning total expenditure is equal to or less than total revenues.

The Citywide budget includes more than 200 funds, with the General Fund being the largest operating fund. The budget is generally composed of an operating budget and a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget. The operating budget covers the provision of services such as police, fire, parks and recreation, and libraries. Since these operations represent ongoing expenses, the budgets are prepared for a single fiscal year, and overall expenditures are equal to or less than anticipated revenues.

The CIP budget invests in long-term capital improvements, facilities, and equipment, with revenues collected and accumulated over time as fund balance. Capital projects often extend beyond a single fiscal year, and so capital budgets often include expenditures funded by both current year revenues and funds previously budgeted.



## Community News

### Good to Know



The County of San Diego is holding a **Special Primary Election on April 8, 2025, for the County Board of Supervisors District 1 seat**. Every vote counts! District 1 includes Chula Vista, Bonita, and other South Bay communities.

To make voting as accessible and convenient as possible, multiple vote centers and ballot drop boxes will be available throughout the city, including City Hall at 276 Fourth Avenue, where voters can cast their votes or drop off their ballots.

#### Chula Vista City Hall Vote Center Hours:

- **March 29 – April 7:** 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- **Election Day – April 8:** 7 a.m. - 8 p.m.

[Visit sdvote.com](https://sdvote.com) for more information including a full list of all available vote centers and ballot drop box locations.

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The City is pleased to offer **30% reductions in sewer service charges to eligible residential customers** for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. Funding is limited and eligibility is based on financial need. The program is funded by available, unrestricted revenues allocated by the City.

The application period for the Reduced Sewer Service Charge Program is from April 14 to May 9, 2025. Residential sewer service customers were sent information on the program and an invitation to apply in late-March.

Please visit the City's [Reduced Sewer Service Charge Program webpage](#) for information on eligibility and required documentation.

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The Cultural Arts Commission (CAC) is now accepting applications for the **2025 Ambassador Program with Sister City Odawara, Japan**. Four Chula Vista residents between the ages of 18 and 28 will be selected to represent Chula Vista in Odawara and will be hosted by an Odawara family. In turn, the Chula Vista Ambassadors will host the selected Odawara students in Chula Vista.

Candidates must be in college or college bound or be young professionals and must be Chula Vista residents. The CAC provides up to \$1,000 travel stipend toward airfare.

Interested students/young professionals must complete the [online](#) application by 5 p.m. on April 13, 2025.

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## Things to Do

April 15<sup>th</sup> is almost here! AARP is offering **free tax assistance** at the Civic Center Library Branch, 365 F St., every Thursday and Friday, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., until April 11, 2025. Tax preparation assistance is available on a walk-in basis only. For more information and a list of what to bring with you for tax assistance, please see the [event listings on the Library Calendar](#), or call 2-1-1.



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South Library, 389 Orange Ave., is hosting '**Grow and Read**' every Tuesday from April 4 to May 20! Children ages 6 to 12 can enjoy a fun, hands-on gardening and literary experience while learning about nature. Participants will take home their own plants and newfound knowledge! Spaces are limited, please call (619) 585-5755 or go to the South Library to sign up.



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Join the **City of Chula Vista's Junior Park Ranger Program!** Kids ages 5-15 are invited to learn about conservation, preservation, and protecting local wildlife through interactive activities led by City Park Rangers! Participants must be accompanied by an adult. No sign-up in advance is necessary.

**When:** Every 4<sup>th</sup> weekend of the month (Sat. & Sun.),  
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

**Where:** Rice Canyon Park, North Rancho Del Rey Pkwy,  
91910.

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**Parks and Recreation** is offering several **exciting upcoming events and activities** this month! To see a full schedule of upcoming events, please visit the [Parks and Recreation activities webpage](#) or call (619) 409-5979.

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The Chula Vista Police Department invites community members to participate in our upcoming Community Engagement Academy! This program provides an exclusive, behind-the-scenes look at law enforcement through dynamic presentations from our elite units, including SWAT, K-9, Forensics, and more.

### **Community Engagement Academy (Ages 18+)**

Dates: April 19 & 26, 2025

Time: 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

This academy will conclude with a graduation ceremony at City Council Chambers, attended by the Police Chief and Mayor. Participants will engage with officers, learn about law enforcement operations, and enjoy refreshments at each session. Space is limited to 20 participants—early applications are encouraged!

Visit the Community Workshop & Academies webpage for [more information and to apply](#).

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Businesses looking to expand into international markets can apply for support through the [MetroConnect](#) accelerator program!

### **Neighborhood Beautification**

**OPERATION PRIDE** continues monthly cleanups. Ranger Perez and Park Ranger Program Manager Alzubaidi collected 35,500 pounds of trash and 159 shopping carts as part of March's OPERATION PRIDE. McAlister (Work For Hope) finished painting Veterans Park and started painting Bonita Long Canyon.

Rangers are continuing to enforce and maintain the parks, while making them clean and safe for the public.



## Meetings/Events

The **Chula Vista City Council** is scheduled to meet at **5 p.m. on Tuesday, April 15**. Members of the public are invited to provide e-Comments on any agenda item. Check the [website for more details](#). A Spanish-language video stream is available and interpretation services for Spanish speakers are provided at each City Council meeting. Members of the public can [watch the meeting via livestream](#). Chula Vista City Council meetings are video recorded and aired live on Cox Cable channel 24 (only in Chula Vista). Recorded meetings are also [archived on the City's website](#).

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There will be four upcoming **Wildfire Preparedness and Hazard Awareness Workshops** hosted by the **Chula Vista Fire Department**. On Monday, March 24, CalFire released the 2025 Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps. To ensure our community is as informed as possible, residents are invited to a series of community workshops that will provide interactive presentations on the Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps as well as what the city is currently doing to mitigate these hazards. There will also be a breakout session with multiple information booths on resources the City currently offers residents to help them prepare in advance to an incident.

Please visit, the City [website](#) for more information.

### **Wednesday, April 9, 5 - 7 p.m.**

Chula Vista Fire Station 1, located at 447 F St.

### **Monday, April 14, 5 - 7 p.m.**

Chula Vista Fire Station 5, located at 341 Orange Ave.

**Wednesday, April 16, 5 - 7 p.m.**

Chula Vista Fire Station 10, located at 1715 Millenia Ave.

**Wednesday, May 7, 5 - 7 p.m.**

Chula Visa Fire Station 8, located at 1180 Woods Dr.

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Dispose of unwanted prescriptions at the City's 28<sup>th</sup> semi-annual **Drug Take Back Day!** on Saturday, April 26, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the John Lippitt Public Works Center, 1800 Maxwell Road. The free event is open to all. Participants are invited to drop off unwanted, unused, or expired prescription drugs for safe disposal. Prescription pills and patches are acceptable for disposal. Pet prescription pills will also be accepted for disposal. Needles and liquids of any kind will not be accepted. **Disposals are anonymous**, and no RSVP is required to participate.

This event is in partnership with the Chula Vista Police Department and U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. In addition to the Prescription Drug Take Back Day, check out the U.S. Department of Drug Enforcement Administration [year-round drug collection site database](#) for information on additional medication disposal sites.