

Proclamation

WHEREAS, Congress designated the third full week in March to be National Poison Prevention Week (NPPW) in 1961 and since then this week has helped to raise national awareness of the dangers of potentially poisonous medicines, household chemicals, and other substances; and

WHEREAS, poisoning is a preventable illness! From the youngest to the oldest, all people and even pets are at risk; and

WHEREAS, poison centers across the country will focus the public's attention on identifying poisoning hazards at home as well as learning ways to prevent poisoning emergencies; and

WHEREAS, a poison is defined as anything that is taken in the wrong amount, in the wrong way or by the wrong person; and

WHEREAS, unintentional poisoning is the leading cause of unintentional injury death in New Jersey outnumbering deaths by motor vehicles and firearms; and

WHEREAS, drug overdose deaths including those from prescription and over-the-counter medications, as well as illegal drugs such as heroin and methamphetamines remain at epidemic proportions for both New Jersey and the United States.; and

WHEREAS, in approximately 94% of unintentional poison death nationally and 96% in New Jersey, drugs are the poison; and

WHEREAS, although the majority of reported poison exposures involve children five (5) years old and younger; the majority of poisoning deaths occur in adults aged 20 to 59; and

WHEREAS, lead poisoning remains a major public health concern. Elevated blood lead levels can cause significant and permanent damage to the health and wellbeing of a young child. There is no safe level of lead. Stop a child's exposure to lead before it causes harm; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Poison Information and Education System (NJPIES), a division of the Department of Emergency Medicine of the New Jersey Medical School of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, provides expert advice, drug information, and poison prevention education to NJ residents through the 800-222-1222 Poison Help Hotline; and

WHEREAS, all services are free, confidential, multilingual and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year even during bouts of Mother Nature; and

WHEREAS, the public can contact a poison expert by calling (1-800-222-1222), chatting (www.njpies.org), or texting (8002221222@njpies.org); and

WHEREAS, consumers must be aware that e-cigarette devices, hookah pipes and liquid nicotine may contain very high doses of nicotine in enticing colors, aromas, and flavors – increasing the likelihood that small children and pets will focus their attention on them. These products pose serious risk of poisoning; and

WHEREAS, poison experts urge residents to use our services as a resource for poison and drug information instead of consulting the internet for information that may not be accurate; and

WHEREAS, we encourage all residents to program the Poison Help Line 800-222-1222 into home, office, and cell phones because a rapid response can make a difference in preventing serious injury and saving lives; and

WHEREAS, poison centers help to eliminate thousands of unnecessary and expensive emergency department visits by offering callers access to free, confidential medical advice; and

WHEREAS, NJPIES is also involved with the state's efforts in homeland defense, counter-terrorism, emergency preparedness and response, bio surveillance, and surveillance for clusters of poisonings and their sources (products, food and beverages, chemicals in the workplace and at home, environmental toxins, drugs and medicine, and animal and insect bites and stings);

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Michael Puzio, Mayor of Rockaway Township do hereby proclaim the week of March 17-23, 2019 as National Poison Prevention Week in New Jersey and encourage all citizens to pledge their commitment to ensuring the safety of themselves, their families, and their community.