

Pharmaceuticals Disposal

Did you know that traces of pharmaceuticals are being detected in the environment, primarily in water (surface water, groundwater, and drinking water) and soil?

One of the ways pharmaceuticals get into our environment is by consumers throwing medications (prescription drugs and non-prescription/over-the-counter drugs) and other personal care products in the garbage, or flushing them down the toilet or the sink.

The potential human health risks associated with minute levels of pharmaceuticals in water in general and drinking water in particular is small; however, taking preventative action by disposing of pharmaceuticals safely helps protect our drinking water sources over the long term. When put down the drain, drugs and pharmaceuticals can get right back into our drinking water supply, and be harmful to fish and other wildlife. Wastewater Treatment facilities are not designed to remove these contaminants from their effluent (or treated waste water discharged into the river).

Unused, expired, or unwanted pharmaceuticals should not be disposed of in the sanitary sewer system. Pharmaceuticals include prescription, non-prescription or over-the-counter, all species, liquid or solid, and regulated or non-regulated. Management of unused, expired, or unwanted pharmaceuticals should be in accordance with applicable federal, state, and/or local regulations.

Drop-off sites at the local police departments are available where you can safely dispose of unused or unwanted drugs or prescriptions.

Medication Disposal Do's and Don'ts

DO

Reduce pharmaceutical and medication waste whenever possible:

- Buy only as much as can reasonably be used in the immediate future.
- Ask the doctor to prescribe only enough to see if a new prescription medication will work for you, and in the lowest dose advisable.

Dispose of the remainder properly:

- Utilize local permanent drop-box to dispose of your unused pharmaceuticals.
- If you are unable to take medications to one of the above, free, 24/7 drop off locations, render your leftovers unattractive by mixing them with coffee grounds or cat litter. Then place them in your trash for disposal in a licensed solid waste landfill.

DON'T

- Flush waste drugs down the toilet or sink drain.
- Burn pharmaceuticals or personal care products in a burn barrel.

More Information

Read Village ordinance [13.26 Use of Public Sewers](#) to learn about what you should and should not discharge into the sanitary sewer.