

## Learn More .....

If you would like more information about pharmaceutical disposal, you may want to visit some of these web links:

There are new federal guidelines for the proper disposal of unused, unneeded, or expired medications:

<http://whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/news/press07/022007.html>

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) has gathered sampling data that confirms the presence of pharmaceuticals in aquatic and terrestrial environments.

<http://toxics.usgs.gov/regional/emc.html>

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has compiled information on potentially negative environmental impacts: <http://www.epa.gov/ppcp/>

The Partnership for a Drug-Free America informs parents, young adults and teens of the very real risks of misusing medicines, "Prescription Medicine Abuse: A Growing Problem"

## City of Glendale Contacts for further info:

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City of Glendale Pretreatment Program

[www.glendaleaz.com/Utilities/Pretreatment](http://www.glendaleaz.com/Utilities/Pretreatment)

City of Glendale Environmental Resources Dept.

[www.glendaleaz.com/environmentalresources](http://www.glendaleaz.com/environmentalresources)



# PRESCRIPTION & NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION DISPOSAL



It's a pain in the drain.

## NO MEDICATIONS DOWN THE DRAIN!

If you're like most people, you have accumulated a collection of prescription, non-prescription and other pharmaceuticals that are no longer needed. Once it was common practice to flush these medications down the toilet or sink.

We now know that some of these substances are bad for our environment. The medications may pass through sewage treatment plants and septic tanks into surface waters, soils, and the groundwater. Following the federal government lead, the City of Glendale makes the following recommendations which are designed to reduce the diversion of prescription and non-prescription medications while also protecting the environment.

### Prescription/Non-Prescription Medication Disposal Recommendations:

- DO NOT put out-of-date or unused medications down the toilet or sink.
- Check to see if your pharmacy has a medication recycling program that disposes of unused or expired medications in an environmentally safe manner.
- Alternatively, take unused, unneeded, or expired medications out of their original container for disposal.
- Mix the medications with an undesirable substance like coffee grounds or kitty litter and put them in an impermeable, plain container such as an empty can or sealable plastic bag. This will ensure the medications are not diverted or accidentally ingested by children or pets.
- Throw these containers in the trash.

### Facts About Medication Disposal

- Medications can be scavenged and illegally sold, or could poison children or pets.
- Unused medications improperly disposed of can harm you and the environment.
- When medications are flushed they may not be broken down by the sewage treatment facility or septic tank system and can enter the soil, surface water or groundwater.

- Research studies have shown that exposure to medications found in waterways is having serious, negative impact on fish and other aquatic life.
- Pollution prevention – the elimination or minimization of the pollution source – is preferable to cleaning up the environment, thereby minimizing both public cost and human and ecological exposure.
- Why should I take time to do this?
- Properly disposing of unwanted medications may be inconvenient, but there are some very compelling reasons to do this in a safe and responsible manner.

### Please don't flush!

Medications that are flushed down the toilet or sink may pass through sewage treatment works and septic tanks. These substances are released into waterways with the wastewater which can lead to adjacent soil and ground water. Similarly, septic tank systems may release the pharmaceuticals directly into the soil and eventually into the groundwater.

### Abuse is prevalent!

Abuse of prescription and non-prescription medications, particularly painkillers, has increased among teenagers and young adults due to the ease of obtaining medications. Sixty percent of the persons who abuse painkillers indicated that they received the medications free from friends or relatives.

### You can make a difference!

Children, pets or scavenging animals could find the medications and ingest them. Medications could be scavenged and illegally sold. Take action to minimize the threat of accidental poisoning or drug abuse. Let's take precautions now to avoid harm to future generations and the environment. YOUR participation IS appreciated!

