

Proper Disposal of Pharmaceuticals

Once medications expire, or no longer prove necessary, the owner of these meds is faced with the task of disposal. A popular method is to flush these dated pharmaceuticals down the toilet and into our sewer systems. Though lists have been issued of medications that are “ok” to flush, traces of these meds ultimately end up in our water systems and have proven to harm aquatic habitats.

The safest alternative is to transfer your meds to a community pharmaceutical take back center. If this option is not made available to you, follow these steps for safe and considerate disposal:

- 1) Place all solid unwanted meds into an impermeable ziplock bag
- 2) Crush any solid tablets and dissolve them with unwanted liquid medications and a little water
- 3) Place used coffee grounds or some other undesirable item into the bag in order to make the disposed meds unappealing (dirt, or cat litter are also good).
- 4) Seal the bag and place into the trash

Watch an example on You Tube called “Safe Disposal of Medications”:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FDswss7iVJw&feature=related>

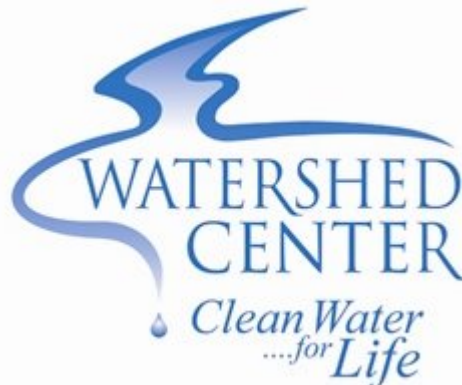
Sources Cited:

State of Oregon: Department of Environmental Quality. 26 Feb. 2008.

<http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/pubs/factsheets/sw/HouseholdPharmaceuticalWasteDisposal.pdf>

Offices of National Drug Control Policy.

http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/drugfact/factsht/proper_disposal.html



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