



SECURE MEDICINE RETURN FOR WASHINGTON



Unwanted Medicines in Our Homes Increase Risks of Poisoning, Abuse, and Improper Disposal

Medicines save lives and treat illnesses. But expired or left-over drugs need to be handled safely and disposed of properly to prevent harm to people and our environment.

Storing unneeded drugs in our medicine cabinets increases risk of accidental poisonings and increases opportunities for illegitimate access and drug abuse. Unwanted medicines that are flushed down toilets into septic systems or wastewater treatment facilities can end up in our surface or ground waters, potentially impacting aquatic organisms. Trash disposal is not secure, especially for narcotics like OxyContin, and does not guarantee medicines won't get into the environment.

Community demand for a safe and secure way to dispose of medicines is high. Group Health Cooperative and select Bartell Drugs locations have collected more than 35,000 pounds of unwanted medicines in their original containers since October 2006, with limited locations and little advertising. Through partnerships with law enforcement, medicine return programs are also collecting and safely destroying legally prescribed controlled substances, like OxyContin and Ritalin. See www.medicinereturn.com for more information.

The Solution: A Secure Medicine Return Program for Washington

The Secure Medicine Return Bill (2SHB 1165 / 2SSB 5279), sponsored by Representative Dawn Morrell and Senator Adam Kline, will create a producer-provided medicine return program that is convenient, safe and secure for residents throughout the state. Over-the-counter medicines and prescription drugs, including controlled substances, will be securely collected and safely disposed to help reduce access to drugs, reduce risks of poisonings, and reduce environmental contamination.

The Secure Medicine Return bill is a shared responsibility approach:

- **Producer-Provided Program:** Producers of prescription and over-the-counter medications will have the flexibility to use their expertise to create the best and most cost-effective program. The bill sets minimum program requirements, but does not mandate specific collection methods. Producers may work together to create a program or may create a program on their own. Drug producers will pay for collection, transportation and disposal. Manufacturers of medicines have more than thirteen years of experience providing and paying for a medicine return program in British Columbia and are operating similar programs in other countries, including Italy, Spain, and France.
- **State Government Oversight:** The Board of Pharmacy will review, approve, and monitor the take-back program, with consultation from the Department of Ecology. Agency staffing for the program will be minimal, but will provide essential oversight. The bill is budget neutral to the state and does not require any general account funds.
- **Voluntary Pharmacy or Law Enforcement Involvement:** Medicine producers may arrange for secure collection sites in law enforcement offices, pharmacies, or other locations; however police, sheriffs, retailers and others can choose to participate or not. Existing programs at some pharmacies and law enforcement offices in Washington demonstrate strong community interest and demand for drug take-back programs.



This photo shows the amount of medicines collected every day from only 25 Group Health pharmacies across the state.

We know that medicines that are safely collected and disposed won't:

- Cause an accidental poisoning death, or
- Be used illicitly by a teenager, or
- Contaminate our environment

Supporters of Washington's Secure Medicine Return Bill (2SSB 5279/ 2SHB 1165)



BUSINESSES & ASSOCIATIONS

Association of Northwest Pharmacies
Bartell Drugs
Group Health Cooperative
Jim's Pharmacy, Sequim
Washington State Pharmacy Association
Washington State Recycling Association

HEALTH & MEDICAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Academy of Pediatrics - Washington State Chapter
Association of Advanced Practice Psychiatric Nurses
Breast Cancer Fund
Children's Alliance
Compassion & Choices of Washington
Greater Spokane Substance Abuse Council (GSSAC)
Home Care Association of Washington
Institute for Neurotoxicology & Neurological Disorders
Planned Parenthood Public Policy Network of Washington
PREVENT! The Substance Abuse Council of Clark County
School Nurse Organization of Washington
Science and Management of Addictions (SAMA) Foundation
TOGETHER!
Washington Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Association
Washington Association for Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention
Washington Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians
Washington Poison Center
Washington Private Duty Association
Washington State Association of Occupational Health Nurses
Washington State Hospice & Palliative Care Organization
Washington State Medical Association
Washington State Nurses Association
Washington State Psychological Association

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Washington Council of Police & Sheriffs (WACOPS)
Washington State Fraternal Order of Police
City of Milton Police Department
Clallam County Sheriff
Clark County Sheriff's Office
Snohomish County Sheriff's Office
Spokane County Sheriff's Office
Thurston County Sheriff's Office

GOVERNMENTS & GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATIONS

Washington State Association of Counties
Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials
Puget Sound Partnership
Supporting Cities: Auburn, Federal Way, Issaquah, Kenmore, Kirkland, Lake Forest Park. and Seattle
Supporting Counties: Clark, Island, King, Kitsap, Snohomish
Coalition for Clean Water
Lincoln County Public Works Solid Waste Management
Local Hazardous Waste Management Program in King County
Public Health – Seattle & King County
Snohomish Health District
Tacoma-Pierce County Health District
Thurston County Board of Health

ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Rivers
Environment Washington
National Wildlife Federation
People For Puget Sound
Sierra Club Cascade Chapter
Surfrider Foundation
The Nature Conservancy
Washington Citizens for Resource Conservation
Washington Environmental Council
Washington Toxics Coalition

CIVIC & FAITH ORGANIZATIONS

Earth Ministry
League of Women Voters of Washington
Lutheran Public Policy Office of Washington State
Older Women's League, Seattle/King County Chapter
Ryan's Solution
Washington State Senior Citizens' Lobby
WashPIRG