

Safely Disposing of Medications

- Keep the Medicines in the original container. This will help identify the contents if they are accidentally ingested.
- Mark out your name and prescription number for safety.
- For Pills: Add some water or soda to start dissolving them
- For Liquids: Add something inedible like cat litter, dirt, sawdust, or cayenne pepper.
- Close the Lid and secure with duct or packing tape.
- Place the bottle(s) inside an opaque (non see-through) container like a coffee can or laundry bottle.
- Tape that container closed.
- Hide the container in the trash. Do not put in the recycle bin.
- Flush prescription drugs down the toilet only if the label or accompanying patient information specifically instructs doing so!



Information provided by the USEPA, Sea Grant of Illinois, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.



For General City of Sherman Information:

City of Sherman
P.O. Box 1106
Sherman, TX 75091
903-892-7206

For Specific Inquiries:

Industrial Pretreatment Services
903-892-7036

Website: <http://www.cityofsherman.org/>



RESIDENTIAL

City of Sherman

**Pollution Prevention:
Pharmaceuticals**



Proper Disposal Of
Pharmaceutical Wastes

Pharmaceuticals-General

When you find an expired prescription in your medicine cabinet your first instinct may be to flush it down the toilet. In the past this was recommended to make sure the medications did not wind up in the wrong hands. But traditional wastewater treatment plants are not designed to remove prescription medications from the water so they pass through the plants and enter our waterways.

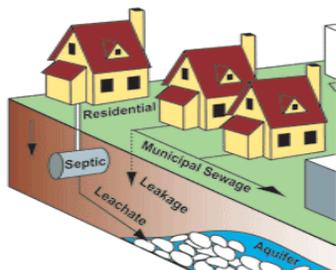


Research has shown that pharmaceuticals are present in our nation's water bodies, and that certain drugs have the potential to cause ecological harm. However, scientists have found no evidence of adverse human health effects from pharmaceuticals in the environment. Advances in

technology has improved the ability to detect and quantify chemicals used in pharmaceuticals, which will allow researcher to identify what effects, if any, these chemicals have on human and environmental health.

Pharmaceuticals in your water system

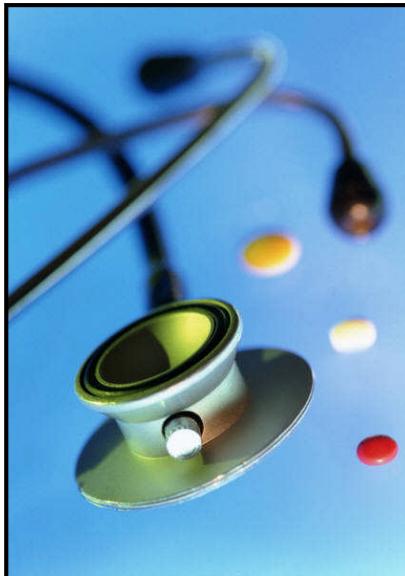
The drugs that we take are not entirely absorbed by our bodies. They are digested and passed into wastewater and surface water. Ground water contamination commonly occurs as infiltration from piping leaks and septic leachate.



Other sources of contamination include irrigation with reclaimed water and biosolids (treated sewage sludge). Because pharmaceuticals dissolve easily and don't evaporate at normal temperatures or pressure, they make their way into the soil and into aquatic environments.

How Can I Reduce the Quantity of Unwanted Medications in my Home?

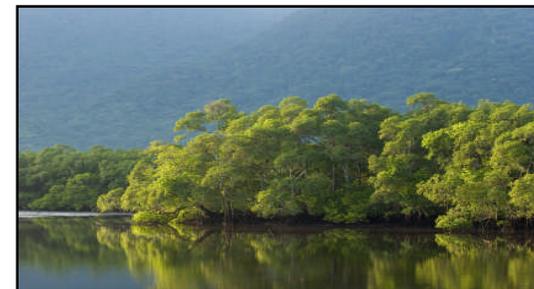
1. Purchase only as much as you need
And take the medication as prescribed
By your physician
2. Centralize all medications in one location secured from children and pets. This may help limit over-purchasing of products you already have.
3. In order to preserve the quality of your medicines, store medications at proper temperature and humidity as recommended on the label. This is sometimes NOT in the bathroom medicine cabinet.
4. Say "NO" to physician samples if you are not going to use them



Why is Medicine Disposal a Concern?

Three Main hazards are:

1. Possible poisoning from accidental ingestion, particularly among young children and pets, if medicines are thrown in the trash
2. Illegal use or theft, including identity theft from discarded containers providing personal patient information.
3. Contamination of water resources which result in reproductive and developmental problems in aquatic wildlife if medicines are flushed.



Protecting the Environment: Pharmaceutical Disposal

Safe methods of disposal are needed for expired or unwanted medicines. Improper disposal of medicines presents both public safety and environmental hazards and wastes millions of health care dollars annually.

- The recommended manner of disposal is to take unwanted/unused/expired medications to a Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection service. The "Crud Cruiser" is a mobile waste collection service that accepts medication wastes. Please check the website at www.fortworthgov.org
- If a HHW service is not available, you can follow the steps on "Safely Disposing of Medications" provided in this pamphlet.