

Prescription drug abuse is the nation's fastest growing drug problem, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have classified prescription drug abuse as an epidemic



People are abusing prescription drugs at an alarmingly high rate

Prescription drugs are the second-most abused category of drugs after marijuana. In addition, the latest National Survey on Drug Use and Health shows that over 50 percent of people who abused prescription pain relievers got them from friends or relatives.

Source: 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health



This brochure was created by the WasteNot Project

It is a cooperative effort between Flathead County Solid Waste District, Flathead City/County Health Dept., Flathead County Sheriff's Office, Northwest Montana Drug Task Force, City of Whitefish Police Dept., City of Columbia Falls Police Dept., Flathead Basin Commission, Flathead Valley Community College Service Learning Program, and Citizens for a Better Flathead.

Visit the WasteNot website
www.WasteNotProject.org

for more information on recycling and reducing waste at home and work.

Contact WasteNot at **756-8993** with additional questions.

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Pharmaceutical Waste in the Flathead

Quick and easy disposal options



You Can Help

- Prevent drug abuse in your neighborhood
- Protect the Flathead's water quality

What you flush or pour down your drain may affect local rivers, lakes, and groundwater

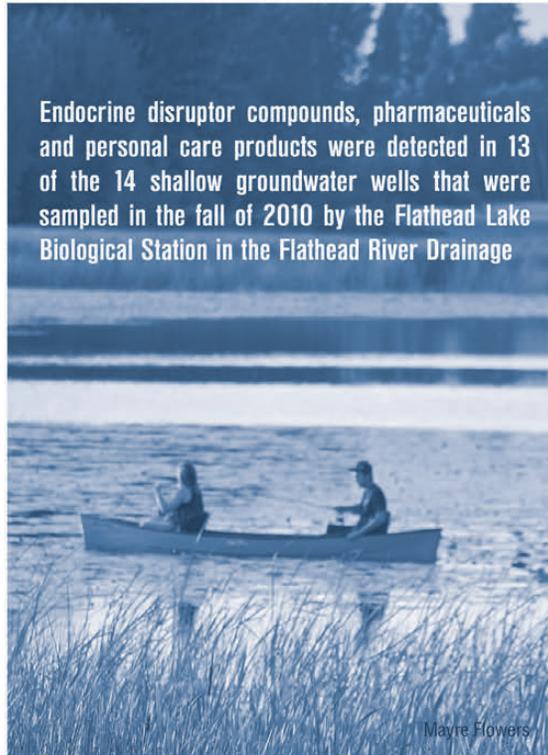


DO NOT FLUSH unused medications and DO NOT POUR them down a sink or drain

When you flush medications down the toilet or pour them down the drain they can easily enter surface water or groundwater because they are, for the most part, not removed or broken down by septic systems or community sanitary sewer systems.

Over 80 percent of waterways sampled by the United States Geological Survey in 30 states in 2002 showed traces of common medications such as acetaminophen, hormones, blood pressure medicine, codeine, and antibiotics.

The amount of unwanted medicine is significant. Studies estimate that between 30 percent and 80 percent of patients do not finish commonly prescribed medicines.



Dispose of unwanted medicines properly to protect our water quality

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has defined Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products (PPCPs) as pollutants. In general, these include any products used by individuals for personal health or cosmetic reasons or used by agribusiness to enhance growth or health of livestock.

PPCPs comprise a diverse collection of thousands of chemical substances, including prescription and over-the-counter therapeutic drugs, veterinary drugs, fragrances, lotions, and cosmetics. Effects on aquatic life are a major concern. Exposure risks for aquatic organisms are much larger than those for humans.

How to Safely Dispose of Unwanted Medicines

Flushing drugs adds to pollution in our waters because wastewater and septic systems are not designed to treat these chemicals. Use these safe and easy alternatives:

Quick and Easy Drop-Off Boxes:

You can safely dispose of unwanted medications in a secure, convenient mailbox-style container. This is a free, anonymous, public service provided by local law enforcement agencies and pharmacies.

Kalispell:

Flathead County Justice Center • 920 S Main St.
Walgreens Pharmacy • 40 W Idaho St.
The Clinical Pharmacy • 200 Conway Dr.
Family Health Care • 1287 Burns Way

Columbia Falls: Police Station • 130 6th St. W

Whitefish:

Whitefish Police Station • 275 Flathead Ave.
Alpine Apothecary • Inside Super 1 Foods

Simply use the plastic bag provided to empty your pill vials or you may place the entire bottle into the box. No sharps or liquids please.

If you are unable to make it to a drop-off box, please follow these steps as a last resort:

1. Dump medicines out of their container into a resealable bag
2. Pour enough water into the bag to let medicines dissolve
3. Add an absorbent like kitty litter, coffee grounds, or sawdust and mix together
4. Seal bag and place in a garbage container out of reach of children and pets

