

Sample News Release

NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release:
Date

Contact: Name
Affiliation
Phone number, e-mail

OLD MEDICATIONS, OTHER PRODUCTS FOUND IN WATER SUPPLIES

CITY, STATE—The majority of Americans take some kind of medication, either a prescription drug or over-the-counter product, and use products such as lotion, cosmetics, laundry detergents, and cleaning products on a daily basis.

These materials and other common household items, known as pharmaceuticals and personal care products, or PPCPs, are now finding their way into water supplies. A 1999 study by the U.S. Geological Survey found chemicals such as steroids, nonprescription drugs, and insect repellents in 80 percent of streams and 93 percent of groundwater sampled.

PPCPs commonly enter the environment through excretion by humans and domestic animals, disposal of unneeded or expired PPCPs by flushing them down a toilet or drain, bathing and swimming, discharge from municipal sewage systems or private septic systems, and other accidental discharge. There are currently no drinking water standards for PPCP compounds.

To help keep these compounds out of water supplies:

- NEVER flush unneeded or expired medications down a toilet or drain, especially if you use a septic system.
- Find out if any pharmacies in your community will take back unneeded or expired medications or if a take-back program exists.
- If no local take-back programs exist or other disposal methods are unavailable, alter the medications in some way (such as adding water or glue to pills, or adding kitty litter or flour to liquid medications), remove all identifying information, and place them in the trash.
- Use personal care products sparingly, completely, and according to label recommendations.
- Unneeded products are best disposed of by landfilling in their original containers.
- Consider using products with ingredients that are more likely to biodegrade harmlessly in the environment, such as vinegar, lemon juice, or baking soda.

For more information about PPCPs, contact your local health department at **000-0000** or visit www.groundwater.org.

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**User note – Feel free to add information about local take-back programs or disposal efforts.*