Safe Disposal of Household Pharmaceuticals

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Don’t Flush It, Trash It!

- **Traditional Method**
  - Flush It
  - Now found in lakes, rivers.

- **New Method**
  - Trash it

- **Current Desire**
  - Collect it
  - Then what?
Home Pharmaceutical Myth #1

- Are Home Pharmaceuticals a Medical Waste?
  - No

- No Pathogen
  - Pathogen - germ, bacteria, virus, protozoa, infectious agent, biological agent that can cause a disease in a host.

- Are actually quite sterile
Home Pharmaceutical Myth #2

- Are Home Pharmaceuticals a Hazardous Waste?
  - For the most part - No
  - Most home-dispensed pharmaceuticals (drugs) are not hazardous when discarded
    - A few might be when discarded
    - Overall percentage is trivial
How to Safely Dispose at Home?

- No longer flush!

- Make unusable
  - Dissolve in water, mix with cat litter
  - Mix with coffee grounds, old yogurt, bad cottage cheese
    - Use your imagination!
What Do Hospitals Do?

- Special Waste
  - 30 TAC 330.3(148) definition
    - (J) drugs, contaminated foods, or contaminated beverages, other than those contained in normal household waste;
  - Collect, package, label
  - Discard in local MSW landfill
Will Collection Ever Make Cents?

- Perception of a Solution to an Unstated Problem
  - Are MSW Landfills contributors of pharmaceuticals to groundwater?

- Does Not Address Core Issue
  - The human body eliminates drugs

- Perception is Reality
  - The train has left the station
MSW Disposal – Fail Safely

- Land Disposal is Now Viewed as Failure
  - If we are to fail, fail safely
    - Clay liners
    - Synthetic liners
    - Leachate collection
    - Groundwater monitoring
    - LF gas monitoring

- Diversion is Viewed as Preferred
  - Must still be safe
  - If we fail, is it still safe?
Final Thoughts

- You may not always have what you want, but you will always have what you’ve got.

- Don’t believe everything you hear.

- Feel free at any time to use common sense.
Hey! Stop Presenting!

- Questions / Comments
  - Anyone? Anyone?

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