

West Virginia Rivers Coalition



West Virginia Consumer Drug Return
Partnership

West Virginia Rivers Coalition

- WVRC is a nonprofit with the mission: **“To seek the conservation and restoration of West Virginia’s exceptional rivers and streams”**.
- WVRC was founded in 1989 by a diverse group of citizens concerned about diminishing water quality throughout the state.



"To put your hands in a river is to feel the chords that bind the earth together." ~Barry Lopez

Background on WV Rivers and Streams

- 32 major watersheds
- Over 1000 streams and rivers
- WV has approximately 32,000 stream miles
- Birthplace of the Monongahela, Cheat, Potomac, Shenandoah, Greenbrier, Gauley and Elk Rivers
- The New River is considered to be one of the oldest rivers in the world

River Issues

- Thousands of miles are severely impaired by a legacy of regulatory and industrial abuse.
- Threats to the waters of West Virginia come from a variety of sources.
 - Natural resource extraction
 - Point source pollution from industry
 - Non Point Source pollution – Agriculture, storm runoff, municipal combined storm and sewer systems
 - Emerging contaminants and persistent pollutants - including endocrine disrupters, pharmaceuticals, manufacturing chemicals

Ways WVRC Works

- Campaign for stronger legislation and water quality standards across the state through:
 - Federal and state laws that allow for citizen involvement
 - Clean Water Act (CWA)
 - The Surface Mining Reclamation and Control Act
 - WV legislative public comment period.
- Public Education
- Working with regulatory agencies involved in implementing and enforcing legislative rules
- Pollution permit review and pollution monitoring
- Direct programming and watershed assistance

Why Pharmaceuticals

- Fish kills in the Potomac watershed
- “Intersex” in fish populations throughout the US



Broader Pharmaceutical Issues

- Every major metropolitan area in the US tests positive for pharmaceuticals in drinking water
- These chemicals are not removed in standard water treatment
- Unknown effect of these compounds on human and other species over time
- Societal consequences
- Abuse
- Unintentional death and poisoning
- Crime and Violence

How to address the issue?

- Most people have unwanted or expired medications in their household
- Until recently Federal public guidelines recommend that these be flushed down the drain
- WVRC began our consumer drug return program to provide WV citizens with an environmentally responsible way to remove this hazard from their home while simultaneously reducing the chemical load in our waterways



Issues surrounding the programming

- DEA Regulations differ for controlled vs. non-controlled substances, and this determines the overall handling of these substances
- Regulations differ from state to state– through careful project design WVRC obtained special DEP hazardous waste division authorization to carry out ongoing consumer return programming
- On-going programmatic Funding
- WVRC needed to work within these constraints to develop programming that met DEA regulations while also addressing our concerns about promoting environmentally responsible disposal.

West Virginia Consumer Drug Return Partnership

- Launched Phase 1 in the fall of 2008
 - Locations at 8 pharmacies in the Potomac
- Launched Phase 2 in 2010 with site expansion, a new name and an ever growing group of partners
- First and only ongoing programming in WV
- 30 active locations in 15 counties
- Working to ensure these substances are removed from consumers homes and do not make it into our waters



How it Works

- Partner with local pharmacies to collect consumer medications.
- Use SHARPS Take-Away boxes
- Licensed Pharmacists participation ensures collection of only non-controlled substances
- Medications are collected in 20 gallon tamper proof boxes kept secure behind the pharmacy counter
- Once full the box is collected and destroyed at a zero waste facility



Participant Agreement



This Cooperative Agreement is entered into to establish a partnership to operate a Consumer Drug Return Program site. The goal of the program is to provide members of the public with a safe and environmentally responsible way to dispose of unwanted medications. This agreement is between:

The West Virginia Consumer Drug Return Partnership (Partnership)
and

(Site Location)

As the implementing organization within the partnership, West Virginia Rivers Coalition (WVRC) will be responsible for the overall management and implementation of programming, and will be the contact point for collection and disposal management.

Under this agreement the Partnership agrees to provide the following:

- Delivery, pick up and incineration of three (3), Twenty (20) gallon collection boxes per year to the site location at no cost (additional boxes may be purchased through the Partnership at a cost of \$120 per box)
- Promotional Materials to be displayed on site – poster and counter top display
- Educational and promotional inserts for prescription bags explaining the program
- An educational and promotional article submitted to the local paper.
- Listing of the location as a participant on WVRC website

Under this agreement the Site Location agrees to the following:

- To post our information and publicity materials at the location
- To ensure no controlled substances are introduced into our collection receptacles
- Regularly promote the program with our branding in any newsletter or other PR material developed by the Site Location
- To include in the [pharmacy icon] and educational materials provided by the partnership when dispensing prescriptions [Rx icon]
- To designate a contact person for WVRC to work with to collection and disposal coordination.

How it Works

- Pharmacies receive 3 boxes a year per site (60 gallons total per site)
- WVRC provides outreach and publicity materials to each site, and works to promote the site in local press
- Additional boxes beyond the 60 initial gallons can also be purchased through WVRC at a discounted rate
- Pharmacies can elect to be self-funded, and purchase boxes at a discounted rate
- Using SHARPS Take-Away we have collected approximately 1,500 lbs of returned medications (excluding packaging) Phase 1 collected approx. 1,000 lbs of medication

KEEP WATERWAYS FREE OF PHARMACEUTICALS



PARTICIPATE IN AN UNWANTED MEDICATION DISPOSAL PROGRAM



Keep Waterways Free of Pharmaceuticals



Take unused and unwanted medications to a community take-back program.

Visit www.wvrivers.org to find a take-back location near you.



Safely Return Your Unused and Unwanted Medicines

Please follow these guidelines:

1. Over-the-counter and prescription medications are accepted
2. Liquids, creams and ointments must be under 4 oz. and in a sealed container
3. Medicines are preferred in their original containers
4. NO controlled substances (narcotics, illegal drugs)
5. NO sharps (syringes, needles, diabetic waste)



www.wvrivers.org

WEST VIRGINIA CONSUMER
DRUG RETURN PARTNERSHIP

Building Partnerships

- Unusual partnerships for an environmental organization
- Look for common goals
- Open communication
- Examples of partners:
 - Senior Centers
 - Law Enforcement
 - Drug Prevention Groups
 - Department of Health and Human Resources
 - Department of Environmental Protection
 - Department of Agriculture
 - High School Senior Project
 - Colleges and Universities

Building Partnerships



Water Matters Conference



DEA Take-Back



Next Steps

- Sustainable funding
- Cradle to grave stewardship of pharmaceuticals
- Full implementation of Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act

WVRC Contact Information

- For more information:
- Kathleen Tyner- Conservation and Advocacy Program Manager
- Email: ktyner@wvrivers.org
- Phone: (304) 637-7201
- Website: www.wvrivers.org

