

# What's in your Water?



## Albany Medical Center Pharmaceutical Waste Prevention Pilot

### What is pharmaceutical waste?

Many medications and personal care products contain toxic chemicals which are being found in wells, lakes, and rivers. The Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed standards for the safe disposal of medications to keep toxic chemicals out of our water supply.

AMC is piloting a system at the South Clinical Campus for the safe disposal of pharmaceuticals as part of an EPA grant.

- This program will reduce pollution while saving energy and water.
- This pilot will contribute to the development of strategies for the region in pharmaceutical pollution prevention.

### Who does this apply to?

Registered Nurses, Physicians, Nurse Anesthetists, Licensed Practical Nurses, Respiratory Therapists, and Pharmacists are responsible for the safe disposal of medications.

### What are examples of pharmaceutical waste?

Some examples of medications that are toxic in the environment are:

Warfarin  
Nitroglycerine  
Chloral Hydrate  
Reserpine



An example of a personal care product that is toxic in the environment is medicated shampoo which contains selenium (Selsen Blue®)

## What do I need to know?

**All medications (tablets, capsules, liquids, and topicals) not returned to the pharmacy or Pyxis machine must be discarded in specified containers located throughout the clinical areas, and in dirty utility rooms.**

If there is any visible medication or personal care product remaining in any syringe, bottle, or tube, it must be discarded in the specified container.

Chemotherapy waste handling is unchanged.

Sharps disposal is unchanged.

Empty medication containers or personal care product bottles are to be discarded into the normal trash.

Electrolyte solutions (ex. IV fluids) may be discarded into the sewer system.

Medications are NEVER discarded into normal trash, “red bag” trash, or the sewer system.

## What can I do to keep our water free from toxins?

**Discard all medications into pharmaceutical waste containers.**

## When do we start?

**Feb 1, 2008**

## What happens next?

This pilot project, will be evaluated and will provide the basis for the implementation of pharmaceutical pollution prevention not only at the AMC main campus but throughout northeastern New York.

## What's in your water.....is up to you!



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