

Disposal of Medicines

Consumer Awareness

<http://www.returnmed.com.au/consumers/>

Consumers have been accustomed to disposing of unwanted and out-of-date medicines using general waste and sewerage options.

Having regard to the potential dangers in retaining these medicines in the home, and environmental considerations, consumers need to know the appropriate action for medicine disposal – and to be encouraged to use this option.

In July 2001 an extensive Consumer Awareness Campaign was conducted in New South Wales. Funded by the New South Wales Department for the Environment, the campaign presented the RUM Project to health professionals and consumers across the State. Funding from the New South Wales Government was \$670,000.

Copies of the Brochure below can be downloaded, or obtained by contacting the RUM Project office (See Contact details).

Old medicines lying around the home 'just in case' are dangerous...



If taken when they're out-of-date
If taken when not prescribed for you
If in reach of little prying fingers

The RUM Project provides the safest and easiest way to dispose of unwanted and out-of-date medicines.

It makes possible the return of all household medicines to any pharmacy at anytime – for free and safe collection and disposal.

Think before you throw

Unwanted medicines are often dumped into the toilet, tipped down the sink or put out with the garbage, which starts a journey that can seriously harm the environment.

More than 500 tonnes of medicines find their way into waterways and landfill every year.

We need to change our behaviours to solve this problem and give the environment a chance.

Don't flush medicines down the toilet.

Sewerage plants can't treat all chemicals in waste water, resulting in contamination of waterways.

Don't pour medicines down the sink.

Household medicines contain highly soluble chemicals which when entered into water systems can harm aquatic life.

Don't throw medicines into the garbage bin.

Household medicines disposed of this way end up in exposed landfill sites

Returning Medicines

By returning out-of-date and unwanted medicines to your local pharmacy, we can make our home a safer place.

This is all you need to do... its really easy

1. Go to your home medicine area.
2. Check expiry dates on all your medicines and separate all expired medicines into a container for return.
3. Check that you actually need all the medicines – separate those medicines no longer needed into the container for return.
4. Take the container to your local pharmacy for disposal.