



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District *of* Greater Chicago

# Press Release

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## **MWRD collects 231 pounds of unwanted drugs for proper disposal during National Take Back Day**

According to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (U.S. DEA), almost three million pounds of prescription medications have been removed from circulation during National Take Back Days. On Oct. 26, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago's (MWRD's) Calumet, O'Brien, and Stickney Water Reclamation Plants served as collection sites, and 231 pounds of unwanted or expired medications were taken out of circulation.

Wastewater treatment facilities are not designed to remove minute concentrations of pharmaceuticals and as a result, the chemicals could wind up in our streams and waterways and could potentially have a negative impact on water quality.

There are many ways to reduce the amount of pharmaceuticals before they have a chance to reach treatment facilities and/or the waterways. The first is to complete the course of treatment as prescribed by the physician. For over-the-counter products, monitor your supply and store them in one location at home to prevent the purchase of additional or extras.

Once the pharmaceuticals are in your home, never pour them down the toilet or drain and never give or sell them to others.

The MWRD has brochures available and a Cook County unwanted medicine collection finder insert available for distribution. To request a supply of these brochures and inserts, please call (312) 751-6633 or email public.affairs@mwrdd.org.

The City of Chicago collects unwanted medicines 24 hour per day, seven days per week at all of its police facilities.

For more information about pharmaceuticals in the waterways or to find out more about proper disposal of medical and hazardous wastes, visit [http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug\\_disposal/takeback/](http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/) and [www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm101653.htm](http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm101653.htm).

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**Our Water Environment: Take it personally**

*Established in 1889, the MWRD ([www.mwrdd.org](http://www.mwrdd.org)) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.*