

# Disposal of Pharmaceuticals – Large On-site Sewage Systems Best Management Practices (BMPs)



Improper disposal of pharmaceuticals into your large on-site sewage system (LOSS) can cause harm to your health and the environment.

Most leftover medicines are considered hazardous waste when they are thrown away. We all share the responsibility to dispose of medicines properly – not by washing them down a sink or flushing them away.

When we flush medicines down a toilet or a sink, they can enter groundwater and surface water through your LOSS. They can end up in your or your neighbor's drinking water.

Instead, use these best management practices to keep unused medicines out of your wastewater, your LOSS, and drinking water. Use these best management practices (BMPs) to help reduce the strength of your wastewater.

- Post signs in common bathrooms and on bulletin boards telling residents and visitors not to put unused medicines in toilets, sinks, and shower drains.
- Create your own pharmaceutical take-back program at your facility to allow others to participate in proper disposal.
- Provide a list of local doctors, pharmacies, veterinarians, law enforcement agencies, and others that will take back unused medications and safely dispose of them for you.
- Call the Washington State Department of Ecology at 1-800-732-9253 for information on where to dispose of unused medicine.
- Visit "take back YOUR MEDS" at <https://www.takebackyourmeds.org/> to learn about medicine take-back programs, and other safe disposal options.

For more information visit our website at [www.doh.wa.gov/loss](http://www.doh.wa.gov/loss) or contact the LOSS Program at 360-236-3330 or [wastewatermgmt@doh.wa.gov](mailto:wastewatermgmt@doh.wa.gov).

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