



The *Medications Return Program* is an e-bulletin published by PCPSA on a quarterly basis to help keep you informed with respect to recent developments. All members in good standing can subscribe to receive this bulletin. Members can unsubscribe by following the instructions at the end of this report.

OVERVIEW

As a member of PCPSA, you will receive, on a quarterly basis, a bulletin outlining new developments and highlighting information pertinent to the Medications Return Program in Canada.



The Medications Return Program began in 1996, and was formerly called British Columbia EnviRx. Pharmaceutical stewardship is mandatory, through its inclusion in the Post-Consumer Residuals Stewardship Regulation (reg. 111/97). Between 1996 and 2000, the program diverted 32,776 kg of unused or expired medications from improper disposal in municipal waste and sewage systems.

Pharmaceutical companies, represented by Rx&D, CGPA, NDMAC and other brand owners not affiliated with these groups, fund this cost-effective program managed by PCPSA. The cost of the program for collection and disposal of these materials in 2003 was \$154,800.

Medication products are a small, but important, component of the waste stream. Unused medications can pose a health, safety and environmental hazard when improperly stored in the home or disposed of in the environment. In B.C. consumers can return their residual medications to most pharmacies. For the quarterly period ending December 2003, approximately 3,000 kg was collected from over 630 participating pharmacies, representing a growth of around 38% from 2002 to 2003.

Given the nature of these wastes, incineration is the accepted best management practice; therefore, residual medications are transported by licensed transporters to a licensed special waste treatment facility in Alberta.

NEW DEVELOPMENT

The Association's new office, located in Ottawa, is up and running with the hiring of Ginette Vanasse as the part-time executive director in February. Our goals for the year are:



- Set up a membership database
- Promotion of the medications return program in B.C.
- Advise members on up-to-date news
- Organize the Annual General Meeting
- Review of sector share of program costs
- Develop website
- Stay current with proposed provincial legislations on medications return programs

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