

**Post-Consumer Pharmaceutical
Stewardship Association**

Medications Return Program News Bulletin



PCPSA May 2008

The *Medications Return Program* is an e-bulletin by PCPSA published on a quarterly basis with information on recent developments. All members can subscribe or unsubscribe by following the instructions at the end of this document.

PROVINCIAL UPDATE

BRITISH COLUMBIA

During the Pharmacist Awareness Week (March 2008) the British Columbia Pharmacy Association organized a media campaign across B.C. on the theme of Responsible Medications Return. Regional photo opportunities and information on the *Medications Return Program* ran in thirty local community newspapers with detail information from pharmacists on the program as well as tremendous coverage in the local news, talk shows and television.

MRP Quarterly Report

The following is an update on the *Medications Return Program* in British Columbia for the January to March 2008 period.

- Weight for the quarter is up by 29% from 2007. The number of containers received has increased by 32.4%.
- The large number of pails requested and the higher volume are the result of the B.C. Pharmacy Association promotion of the program during the Pharmacy Week and the promotion done by the Capital Regional District.

Collection Summary (actual):	Q1 - 2008	Q1- 2007
Containers Shipped to Pharmacies	913	546
Containers Received from Pharmacies	703	531
Weight of Pharmaceuticals (kg)	7,734	5,965

ONTARIO Municipal Household Hazardous Waste

The Honourable John Gerretsen, Ontario's Minister of the Environment spoke at Stewardship Ontario's Annual General Meeting held last month and congratulated industry for diverting over 1 million tonnes of waste in 2007 from land fill sites through blue box recycling. The Minister discussed how to improve the blue box program with the inclusion of new materials and expansion to multi-unit dwellings. He also indicated that the provincial government will begin an overhaul of the *Waste Diversion Act*. Phase 1 of the Municipal and Household Special Waste recycling initiative is set to begin on July 1, 2008. However, no date was given for the implementation of Phase 2, which includes pharmaceutical waste. Although Stewardship Ontario was appointed the industry funding organization for Phase 1 materials, we will argue that all medications return programs be administered and funded through PCPSA. We are scheduled to meet (June 13) with Ms. Joyce Barretto, the CEO of Stewardship Ontario to promote our cause. To view Phase One of the plan, click on the icon for MHSW at www.stewardshipontario.ca.

FEDERAL

Assessment Report on Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products (PPCP)

In Canada, residues of pharmaceuticals and personal care products have been found in wastewater effluent, agricultural soils, surface waters, groundwater, and drinking water. Scientists and regulators met to discuss the current state of research on PPCPs in the Canadian environment and identify key actions to guide future research as well as Canada's path forward on this emerging environmental issue. A synthesis of this discussion and key recommendations are presented in a report titled *Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products in the Canadian Environment: Research and Policy Directions* now available at <http://www.nwri.ca/ppcp-ppsp/i-cover-e.html>.

Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products

Robert White (president) attended a seminar on Parliament Hill where Dr. Chris Metcalfe (Trent University) spoke on: "What are we flushing down the drain? Assessing the hazards of pharmaceuticals and personal care products." Dr. Metcalfe acknowledged that while these substances will not be banned and their risk is not high, some concerns have been raised with respect to vulnerable populations such as infants, children and pregnant women. One of the risk management options identified at the seminar were aligned with PCPSA objectives: ex: to implement a national medications return program for expired and unused products, which can prevent up to 15 per cent of the pharmaceuticals from entering the environment. Other options for dealing with environmental risks dealt with the application of biosolids on agricultural land and municipal sewage. While Dr. Metcalfe is not a proponent of incineration, he believes this is the best option for unused and expired pharmaceuticals.

FORTHCOMING FROM THE OFFICE

➤ **Contributions for 2008 are due**

- PCPSA would like to remind members who have not yet paid their sector share to do so **today**.
 - Attending the 4th National Product Stewardship Forum on Pharmaceuticals in Boston in early June.
 - Meeting with Waste Diversion Ontario following the AGM and Board of Directors Meetings in Toronto.
 - Annual Report on the B.C. *Medications Return Program*.
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*****Info & Feedback:**

Post-Consumer Pharmaceutical Stewardship Association (PCPSA) is a non-for-profit organization mandated with developing harmonized approaches to medications return programs in Canada. Questions or comments about this newsletter can be sent to info@medicationsreturn.ca. Please pass this newsletter on to those who may be interested.