



Snohomish County Partnership for Secure Medicine Disposal

Date: June 2011
To: Snohomish County Veterinarians
From: Snohomish County Partnership for Secure Medicine Disposal
Re: Proper Disposal of Unwanted Pet Meds in Snohomish County

Keeping unwanted and unneeded medicines in homes can pose a risk to your customers and staff, their families and our community. We are pleased to share the enclosed information about our innovative multi-agency program—the Snohomish County Partnership for Secure Medicine Disposal.

Veterinarians and customers want to do the right thing. In light of recent mixed messages and confusion about proper disposal, and even some disposal instructions that have the potential to be dangerous, we are providing information about proper disposal options in Snohomish County.

Disposal in the trash and flushing are not allowed in Snohomish County. Flushing unwanted medicines down the toilet, or throwing them in the trash, are no longer proper disposal methods. (Mixing with kitty litter or other materials, and placing them in the trash, is not an acceptable practice in Snohomish County, as many of the medicines are hazardous waste.) Pharmaceutical compounds are now showing up in U.S. streams and groundwater. Disposal in the trash can still make them available for illegal use and accidental poisonings of children, pets and wildlife.

Safe disposal is easy and convenient in Snohomish County. Since December 1, 2009, households have been able to dispose of ALL unwanted medicines, including prescribed controlled substances, at 27 law enforcement locations within our county. Currently, Group Health and a number of Bartell Drugs locations accept unwanted medicines (not including prescribed controlled substances). Until other safe options are available, these are the programs that residents should use to dispose of unwanted meds in Snohomish County.

We can help you get this information out. We have provided materials to help you, your staff and your customers learn about this important program:

- **Fact sheet** on the back of this letter to learn about the problem and the solutions.
- **Brochures** for you and your staff to read to learn about this program.
- **Posters** for you to post in your clinic where your customers and staff can see them.
- **Bookmarks** with program information for you to distribute to customers and staff.
- **Business cards** with quick contact information for you to give out to your customers.
- **Stickers** with supply re-ordering contact information for you to put on your brochure rack or other handy location.

If you would like an additional supply of educational materials, or if you would like to be on our mail list to receive program updates or to receive information regarding proper disposal of your clinic waste, please contact Jonelle Fenton-Wallace at: jfw@snoco.org. To learn more about the program, visit www.snoco.org and search "pharmaceuticals" or call 425-388-3199.

