

Illinois American Water encourages customers to participate in National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

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ILLINOIS – Illinois American Water is encouraging customers to participate in the Drug Enforcement Agency's (DEA) National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. The Oct. 22, 2016 event is the 12th opportunity in six years offered by the DEA to rid homes of potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs.

The event also helps to protect water sources by preventing the flushing of medications. Residents are encouraged to drop off their unwanted medications at approved collection sites so they can be incinerated, which is the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) recommended approach for pharmaceutical disposal. Both flushing medications down the toilet and throwing them in the trash are discouraged. Collection sites participating in this event can be located by visiting www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/index.html

“This event is a great opportunity for residents to securely drop off any unused or expired medications,” said Bruce Hauk, Illinois American Water President. “It’s important for us to keep these items out of our landfills and water supplies as well as the hands of those who may misuse or abuse them.”

During the April 2016 Drug Take Back Day event, the DEA collected a record-breaking amount of unused medications. Over 893,000 pounds of unwanted medicines—about 447 tons—at almost 5,400 sites across the United States was collected. In Illinois, 24 tons was properly disposed of through the one-day take-back event.

In addition to the DEA’s efforts, Illinois American Water has also partnered with the Prescription Pill and Drug Disposal (P2D2) program, local pharmacies, environmental stewards, police departments and government officials to implement 37 permanent programs in Illinois. These programs are located in Alton, Bartonville, Belleville, Caseyville, Champaign (three sites), Chicago, Chillicothe, Collinsville, Columbia, Dixon, East Alton, Edwardsville, Fairmont, Freeburg, Glen Carbon, Madison, Maryville, Morrison, Mt. Carroll, Mt. Vernon, O’Fallon, Orland Hills, Pekin, Peoria (three sites), Peoria Heights, Pontiac, Red Bud, South Beloit, Sterling, Streator, Urbana (two sites) and Waterloo.

Hauk said, “We encourage those who cannot participate on Oct. 22 to continue to use their community pharmaceutical disposal programs. All of these efforts make a difference.”

The P2D2 model was developed by Pontiac High School Township students and their teacher Paul Ritter. Through P2D2’s efforts, millions of pounds of unwanted medications have been collected and disposed of properly. To find a permanent collection program in Illinois, please visit <http://www.epa.illinois.gov/services-locator/>. To learn more about P2D2 please visit www.p2d2program.org.

About Illinois American Water – Illinois American Water, a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), is the largest investor-owned water utility in the state, providing high-quality and reliable water and/or wastewater services to approximately 1.2 million people. American Water also operates a customer service center in Alton and a quality control and research laboratory in Belleville. Illinois American Water ranked “Highest in Customer Satisfaction with Water Utilities in the Midwest” according to J.D. Power’s 2016 Water Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction StudySM. American Water is the largest and most geographically diverse publicly traded U.S. water and wastewater utility company. Marking its 130th anniversary this year, the company employs 6,700 dedicated professionals who provide regulated and market-based drinking water, wastewater and other related services to an estimated 15 million people in 47 states and Ontario, Canada. More information can be found by visiting www.amwater.com.

