

Illinois American Water Encourages Customers To Participate In National Prescription Drug Take Back Day On Oct. 29

by Karen Cotton

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BELLEVILLE - Illinois American Water is encouraging customers to participate in the Drug Enforcement Agency's (DEA) National Prescription Drug Take Back Day this coming Saturday, Oct.29, 2022. Customers are encouraged to drop off unwanted medications at approved collection sites so they can be incinerated. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends having unwanted medications incinerated. Flushing medications down the toilet and throwing them in the trash are discouraged.

The event is Saturday, Oct. 29, 2022, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Participating Illinois Take Back Day collection sites can be located [here](#). Take Back Day events help keep medications from getting into the wrong hands and provide an opportunity for medication to be disposed of in an environmentally-friendly way. Proper disposal also helps prevent medications from being flushed down the toilet or poured down a drain. The DEA offers National Take Back Day twice a year in April and October. In April 2022, over 23,000 pounds of prescription drugs were collected in Illinois from 158 collection sites across the state.

Rachel Bretz, director of water quality and environmental compliance for Illinois American Water, explains, "Everyone can make a difference and protect our water sources by simply cleaning out their medicine cabinets. We hope residents participate in Take Back Day to dispose of unwanted medications safely and help prevent medications from entering our waterways. Participation also helps to prevent unwanted medications from misuse and is a much safer alternative than flushing or throwing them away."

Illinois residents who are unable to participate Saturday are encouraged to use local, permanent community pharmaceutical disposal programs. Through partnership and collaboration with local pharmacies, environmental stewards, police departments and government officials, Illinois American Water has helped implement permanent pharmaceutical disposal programs across the state. These programs and others can be found on Illinois EPA's Beyond the Bin map [here](#). The map is searchable by location.

The pharmaceutical disposal programs were created through a model developed by Pontiac Township High School students and their teacher Paul Ritter. The program, [P2D2](#), has been recognized as a model for all pharmaceutical disposal programs. Through P2D2's efforts, millions of pounds of unwanted medications have been collected and disposed of properly.

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 wastewater services to approximately 1.3 million people. American Water also operates

a quality control and research laboratory in Belleville. With a history dating back to 1886, American Water is the largest and most geographically diverse U.S. publicly traded water and wastewater utility company. The company employs more than 6,400 dedicated professionals who provide regulated and regulated-like drinking water and wastewater services to more than 14 million people in 24 states. American Water provides safe, clean, affordable and reliable water services to our customers to help keep their lives flowing. For more information, visit amwater.com and diversityataw.com. Follow American Water on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).