

Pharmaceutical Waste

Do Riverside County Landfills accept this waste?

Yes

No

(See Recommended Disposal Guidelines)

Conditionally

(See Special Conditions)

Case by case

(See Approval Process)

Are there other alternatives for this waste?

Yes

(See Alternative Recycling Locations)

No

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Definition

Pharmaceutical waste is medication that has been spilled, has been rejected for use by the patient, or otherwise cannot be returned to the pharmacy for reuse. It can be in the form of a pill, an oral liquid, an intravenous liquid or another form that is intended for a patient to consume. Some of these wastes can also cause injury to solid waste employees through exposure and may cause environmental damage.

Household Pharmaceutical Waste includes pharmaceutical waste that was generated in the home by the residents of the home. This waste does not include pharmaceutical waste that was generated through home health care such as hospice, visiting nurses, etc.

Commercial Pharmaceutical Waste includes pharmaceutical waste from facilities such as hospitals, pharmacies, convalescent homes, and other institutions. Some pharmaceutical waste is regulated as hazardous waste. It is the responsibility of the generator to properly classify their waste as either hazardous waste or non-regulated solid waste.

Special Conditions

Household Pharmaceutical Waste

Residents should ask the supplying pharmacy or supplying service if they offer a waste pharmaceutical take back program. If this service is available, it is the best management practice for this waste stream. Because this service is not always available and to reduce the potential for child exposure and misuse, Department landfills accept household pharmaceutical waste if residents do the following:

- Remove personal identification from medication bottles and containers before throwing them in the trash to protect your personal information.
- Empty liquid medication onto absorbent paper towels or rags and dispose of them in the regular trash.
- Crush pills and mix the contents with kitty litter, coffee grounds, or other masking material, and place in the regular trash.
- For inhalers, empty container by expelling all propellant. Dispose of small empty aerosol container in trash.

The Department will continue this service until a more environmentally friendly service is available. Visit the Department's website at:

<http://www.rivcowm.org/opencms/hhw/index.html#Sharps>

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often to see if other alternatives have been established.

The following website contains additional information that might be useful <http://www.smarxtdisposal.net>

Household pharmaceutical waste does not meet the management requirements for hazardous waste found in Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.5. With regards to household pharmaceutical collection, Health and Safety Code Section 117635(g) declares that the transporting, manifesting, and permitting requirements for hazardous waste do not apply. Household pharmaceutical waste does not need not be managed as a hazardous waste. Disposal of household pharmaceutical wastes to a solid waste landfill or wastewater treatment facility would not violate California hazardous waste law. However, flushing this waste down the toilet may be more harmful to the environment than placing this waste in the solid waste stream.

Commercial Pharmaceutical Wastes

Department landfills only accept commercial pharmaceutical wastes that are not a Federal or State regulated hazardous waste or controlled substance.

Internal Operating Procedures

A B C D E F G H Not applicable

Note: Internal Operating Procedure A refers to Household Pharmaceutical Waste and Commercially generated Pharmaceutical Waste that is non-hazardous and not a controlled substance.

Internal Operating Procedure F refers to Commercially Generated Pharmaceutical Waste that is hazardous or is a controlled substance.