



Oregon Enacts Drug Take-Back Law, Funded by Prescription Makers

AUGUST 25, 2019



In a little less than two years, you'll be able to return leftover medications to pharmacies – and they will, in turn, dispose of them in an environmentally responsible manner for you.

Governor Kate Brown signed legislation pushed through the Legislature this last session by Rep. Sheri Schouten, D-Beaverton that ensures all Oregon communities will have free and convenient access to safe drug disposal. Under the legislation, the program must be in place by July 1, 2021.

Why It's Important

Health experts have found that forgotten leftover medications laying around in medicine cabinets are consumed by children in the house at an alarming rate.

But, environmental studies have found dumping the meds in the trash or down a drain means they wind up in the water supply for humans and other animals – making for an unhealthy situation.

Who to Credit

KTVZ reports (<https://www.ktvz.com/news/new-oregon-law-enacts-statewide-drug-take-back-program/1110874143>) DEQ Senior Legislative Analyst Abby Boudouris shepherded the bill through the Oregon Legislature. "Passing the drug take-back law required a remarkable collaborative effort," she said. "It's thanks to the support of such a diverse coalition that the bill was able to pass."

That collaborative effort was built on 15 years of work by the [Product Stewardship Institute](https://www.productstewardship.us/) (PSI), a national nonprofit seeking to have similar legislation enacted

throughout the country.

Funding

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Oregon is the sixth state to requiring drug companies to fund a drug take-back program. The other five are Washington, California, Vermont, Massachusetts and New York.

“This new law is a major victory for consumers. It is a critical strike against the prescription opioid crisis and will go a long way to protect our water quality,” said PSI Chief Executive Officer Scott Cassel, according to KTVZ news. “It will remove a substantial financial and management burden from governments and taxpayers, placing the primary responsibility with the drug companies that put these products on the market and profit from them.”

By Andy Thompson

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