

Safe & Sustainable Disposal for Medications

Launched in 2010 as a direct response to mounting evidence of pollution in our waterways and drinking water, and prescription drug abuse among our nation's youth, Covanta's Prescription for Safety program, also known as Rx4Safety, provides for the safe disposal and ultimate destruction of medications. Rx4Safety is free of charge for community drug take-back programs utilizing Covanta's Energy-from-Waste facilities for disposal.

Water Contamination

Whether flushed down the toilet, washed down the sink or thrown into the garbage, medications can and do contaminate surface and groundwater supplies. Wastewater treatment plants are incapable of filtering out pharmaceuticals from the water supply, passing it along to communities and families in their drinking water. And the medications that wind up in landfills leach into the surrounding surface and groundwater.

Although the effects on human health have not yet been fully determined, a study conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) last year revealed that nearly 80% of the rivers tested contained traces of pharmaceuticals, including antibiotics, steroids, hormones and contraceptives.



Since launching Rx4Safety, Covanta has destroyed more than 30,000 pounds of unwanted medications free of charge from collections held across the U.S.



Rx4Safety™

A Covanta Energy Program

Abuse

The rate of prescription drug abuse by our youth is growing at an alarming rate. According to the Partnership for a Drug Free America, the average age when children start abusing prescription drugs is 12. Equally disturbing is that 20 percent of high school students are known to have abused various prescription drugs such as pain killers. What's more, 70% of the children who admit to abusing prescription medication say they received the drugs from family or friends.

What's causing the problem of prescription drug abuse? Simply put, access. Many households don't think of or don't know what to do with unused medications so they remain available for the taking, easily accessible in the family medicine cabinet.

An Environmentally Sound Solution

Working alongside leading organizations such as the Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) and the Prescription Pill and Drug Disposal Program (P2D2), Covanta developed Rx4Safety to provide a means of safe disposal, with no impact to the environment. Once collected, all medications are securely transported to a local Covanta Energy-from-Waste facility and deposited into a combustion chamber equipped with state-of-the-art air pollution control equipment where they are completely destroyed.

Properly disposing of prescription medications protects precious resources, as well as people, plant life and animals. Proper disposal can also help prevent drug abuse and minimizes accidental poisonings and overdoses, directly contributing to the health and well-being of surrounding communities and collected drugs are used to create safe, renewable electricity for the surrounding communities.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Contact your local municipality to determine if a drop-off event is scheduled for the near future in your community.

Municipalities interested in participating should obtain appropriate regulatory approvals in order to ensure that such wastes are not classified as hazardous waste from a federal, state or local perspective. Each program is subject to a due diligence review by Covanta Energy.

For more information, please email Rx4Safety@covantaenergy.com.



Properly disposing of medications at EfW facilities prevents contamination of water supplies and can also help prevent drug abuse.

Energy-from-Waste

Sustainable waste management begins with efforts to reduce, reuse and recycle, but unfortunately there is not a way to eliminate waste completely just yet. Energy-from-Waste (EfW) provides safe and sustainable solid waste disposal, and helps to solve critical global challenges at the same time.

EfW facilities offset the greenhouse gases produced at fossil-fuel power plants and eliminate the potential for trash to generate methane gas as it does in landfills. (Methane is a greenhouse gas 25 times more potent than CO₂). EfW facilities also recover thousands of tons of metals for recycling that would otherwise have to be mined, and reduce the need to haul trash in diesel trucks to distant landfills.

State-of-the-art Covanta EfW facilities complement recycling, recovering over 400,000 tons of metal annually. In fact, communities home to an EfW facility have recycling rates higher than the national average of 24% with some more than doubling it, reaching over 50%.

About Covanta Energy

Covanta Energy (NYSE:CVA) is the world's largest owner and operator of Energy-from-Waste (EfW) facilities. Covanta's 44 EfW facilities worldwide provide communities with a sustainable solution to their solid waste disposal needs by using trash to generate clean, renewable energy. Annually, Covanta's state-of-the-art facilities safely convert more than 20 million tons of waste into 9 million megawatt hours of clean electricity and create more than 9 billion pounds of steam which is sold to a variety of industries.

HOW EFW WORKS

Municipal solid waste is delivered to a facility and transferred to a combustion chamber where self-sustainable combustion is maintained at extremely high temperatures. The heat from that process boils water to create steam that is either sold as is or, in most cases, used to drive a turbine, generating the electricity we sell. Ash is processed to recover metal for recycling. All gases are collected, filtered and cleaned before being safely released into the atmosphere.

