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PHARMACISTS

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WATCH: Why you should return old drugs: Okanagan pharmacists weigh in

By Global News

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KELOWNA - When was the last time you cleaned out your medicine cabinet? Getting rid of expired or unused drugs might not be something you think about very often. However, pharmacists are urging you to do some spring cleaning by returning any medications you're not using to your pharmacy for safe disposal.

The B.C. Medications Return program helps divert unused medications from

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helps divert unused medications from being thrown in the trash or flushed down the toilet where they have the potential to harm the environment. The Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) says improperly disposing your prescription drugs could also have a negative impact on your water source.

“We were told for a long time to flush them down the toilet but now they’re showing up in the lakes and in the streams and nobody wants that,” says Anna Worwick Sears, OBWB Executive Director.

Sears says the risk from flushing old drugs down the toilet or dumping them in the sink isn’t as big for humans as it is for fish and wildlife.

“There are a lot of different kinds of steroids and different kinds of compounds, heart medicines and birth control pills that dissolve in the water and can harm wildlife,” says Sears.

The B.C. Pharmacy Association says thanks to awareness campaigns, Central Okanagan residents have returned almost twice as many unused medications annually than they did five years ago.

