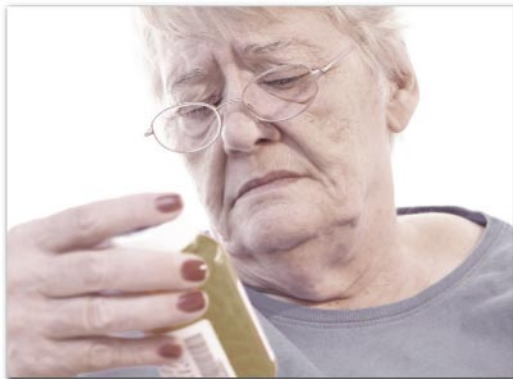


DO YOU HAVE A DEADLY DRAIN?

PROTECT YOUR DRINKING
WATERS AND YOUR RIVERS

SPREAD THE WORD

If you follow the tips in this brochure, you'll be helping your downstream neighbors drink safe, clean, healthy water. But what about you? Help spread the word about responsible behavior around the house so the people who live upstream from you will follow your good example!



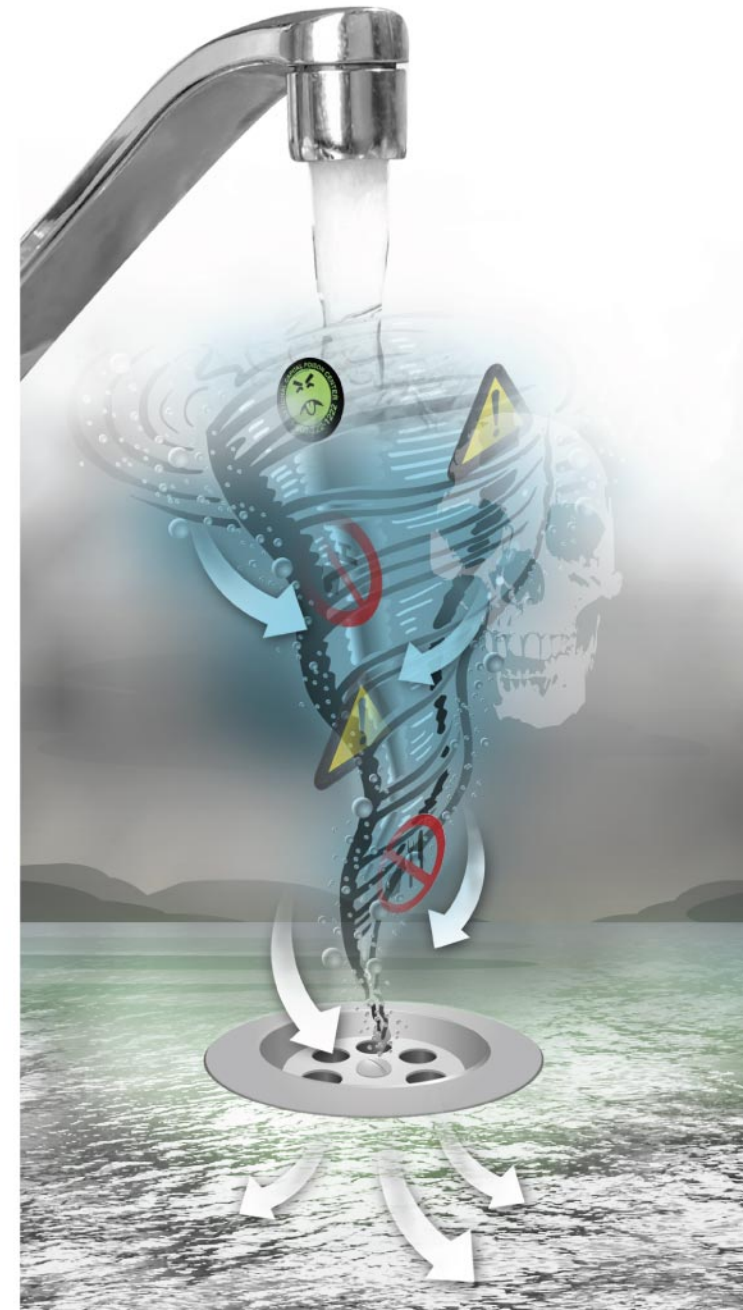
FOR MORE INFORMATION

POTOMAC WATER WATCH
www.potomacwaterwatch.org
WEST VIRGINIA RIVERS COALITION
www.wvrivers.org

Potomac Water Watch is a voluntary program run by these groups:
West Virginia Rivers Coalition
Appalachian Center for the Economy and the Environment
Friends of the Cacapon River

It is a supported partner of
Potomac Headwaters RC&D

This brochure was made possible by a Stream Partners Grant from the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection



WHAT GOES DOWN YOUR DRAIN ENDS UP DOWNSTREAM

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO

WE ALL LIVE DOWNSTREAM FROM SOMEBODY. HERE'S WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU!

It is easy to forget that medicines, personal care and cleaning products — the things we use everyday — contain chemicals. After all, we use them to keep our families healthy and our home germ-free.

Unfortunately many of these medicines and chemicals can be dangerous for both humans and the environment. If we don't use them correctly and dispose of them properly, these chemicals can pollute our waterways and water supplies!

That's because the water treatment plants in WV don't remove most of the chemicals or medications that you send down the toilet or down the drain. Scientists are finding medicines like high blood pressure treatments, antidepressants, birth control hormones, antibiotics and many others in waterways, wells, and tapwater. These chemicals are suspected as one cause of the "gender-bender" fish in the Potomac River — male fish with eggs. Scientists are now researching the effects on humans.

So keep this in mind — We all live downstream. Whatever goes down your drain, somebody may use it to cook with or to drink. And whenever you turn on your faucet, remember that somebody may have used that water already!

HOW DO WE KEEP HOUSEHOLD CHEMICALS AND MEDICINES OUT OF OUR WATER?

1 DISPOSE OF MEDICINES PROPERLY

Taken properly, medicines help you stay healthy. But if you flush them down the toilet, they end up in rivers, streams, and somebody else's drinking water. Don't flush unwanted or expired drugs down the toilet. Don't dump them down the sink!

- Return unused medicines to a consumer drug return location. (For a list of these sites go to www.potomacwaterwatch.org, www.wvivers.org or WVRC – 304-637-7201.
- If a drug return location is unavailable foul your medication with coffee grounds or kitty litter and put in the trash.



Properly discarding unwanted and expired drugs as part of the Potomac Water Watch's Consumer Drug Return Program are representatives of the three founding organizations: Shanda Minney, WVRC; Margaret Janes, ACEE; Abby Chapple, FCR & PHRCD.

2 USE SAFE, NONTOTOXIC HOUSEHOLD CLEANING PRODUCTS

Dirty mop water looks nasty and if you use chemical household cleaning products, it's dangerous, too. Remember that most clinical tests find that plain soap and water is just as effective in destroying bacteria as chemicals and is a lot safer for our water supply.

- Generally speaking, use products that labeled "natural," "organic" or "chemical free" (Go to www.ewg.org for details on product ingredients.)
- Absolutely avoid products that list Triclosan and Triclocaban on their labels.



3 USE SAFE, NONTOTOXIC PERSONAL PRODUCTS

Many hand/body lotions, cosmetics, perfumes — are filled with chemicals that are not good for you. And when you wash these chemicals off your body, they go down the drain and into West Virginia's waterways. Even some toothpastes have dangerous chemicals!

- To identify ingredients in cosmetics go to www.safecosmetics.org
- Choose and use chemical free products.

For information on many kinds of products go to the government site: www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/factsheets/householdproducts.html.