



As You Sow Congratulates Walgreens for Drug Take-Back Kiosks

OAKLAND, CA – February 11, 2015 – Walgreens [has committed to provide drug disposal kiosks](#) in 500 stores across 39 states and Washington, D.C. as part of a program to combat drug abuse, in a move that was commended by shareholder advocacy organization As You Sow.

“We salute Walgreens for voluntarily providing free disposal kiosks at some stores,” said Conrad MacKerron, Senior Vice President at As You Sow. “Many people hold on to unneeded drugs because they lack easily accessible collection and disposal options, which can have tragic consequences.”

The company noted “prescription drug abuse continues to be a public health and safety risk.” According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 6.5 million Americans misused a prescription drug in 2014, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 47,055 drug overdose deaths, including prescription and illicit drugs.

Lack of free, accessible programs for disposal of consumer prescription drugs prompted As You Sow to undertake [a new initiative](#), engaging major pharmaceutical companies and filing shareholder resolutions with [AbbVie](#), [Johnson & Johnson](#), and [Merck & Co.](#), asking the companies to develop policy options for working with industry peers to take primary responsibility for developing a national network of local take-back programs for safe collection and disposal of unused and expired drugs and accessories. In addition this will keep drugs and plastic containers out of landfills and waterways where they contribute to water pollution. Several municipalities in California have enacted drug take-back ordinances. Despite this progress, the pharmaceutical industry continues to try to block efforts to implement legislation requiring industry to pay for safe disposal. “We believe the companies that put medications on the market and profit from them should be primarily responsible for financing collection systems just as they do in Canada and Mexico,” said MacKerron.

With Walgreen’s action, the availability of kiosks increases from about 1% to 2% of U.S. pharmacies. Major drug manufacturers have a great opportunity to broaden the program started by Walgreens and expand it to a much greater portion of communities.

As You Sow also works on programs to increase recycling of packaging, including many plastics, and to slow the migration of littered plastics into streams and oceans. Learn more at www.asyousow.org/waste.

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As You Sow is a nonprofit organization that promotes environmental and social corporate responsibility through shareholder advocacy, coalition building, and innovative legal strategies. For more information visit www.asyousow.org.