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## **Pharmaca Integrative Pharmacy expands medication “take back” sites**

*Green pharmacy program keeps unused medications out of local water supply*

**BOULDER, Colo.** (October 20, 2008) – As part of its ongoing commitment to the environment and sustainability, Pharmaca Integrative Pharmacy is now offering a prescription “take back” program at all of its stores. Customers are encouraged to bring in unused or expired medications for eco-friendly disposal by an FDA-approved company. Pharmaca is proud to be the first retail pharmacy bringing year-round pharmaceutical collection services to many communities it serves.

A recent AP investigation found that an estimated 46 million Americans consume drinking water contaminated with pharmaceuticals. Other studies have shown similarly troubling results, such as the U.S. Geological Survey’s 2002 report on waterway contamination due to pharmaceutical and personal care products. This particular analysis found drugs like antibiotics, antidepressants, hormones and painkillers present in 80 percent of the water supplies tested.

While some of this contamination is a natural byproduct of human excretion, much of it results from the improper disposal of unused and expired medications. Discarding these products by flushing or throwing them away makes it possible for their chemical components to persist in local water supplies.

Pharmaca’s program will send returned medications to an incineration facility, where high temperatures break down chemicals and emissions are capped and treated. The World Health Organization recommends high temperature incineration as the best method for disposal.

“Our pharmacists are in a unique position to educate customers about properly handling prescription waste,” said Barry Perzow, CEO and president of Pharmaca. “As a company that strives to improve consumer health, we believe this is the right thing to do for our customers, their communities, and the environment.”

Starting September 29th, Pharmaca will accept over-the-counter medications, sharps including needles and syringes, medication samples, expired vitamins and supplements, and prescription medications with the exception of controlled substances at its pharmacy counters.

Pharmaca has piloted the green pharmacy program in Berkeley, Monterey, and Oakland, California over the past year in collaboration with the Teleosis Institute. Together, these locations have collected over 700 lbs of medications. The enormous success and community response at those stores encouraged the company to offer this service at all 23 of its stores.

### **About Pharmaca**

Pharmaca Integrative Pharmacy Inc., founded in June 2000 and based in Boulder, Colo., is the nation’s first and largest integrative pharmacy chain combining conventional prescriptions with natural and complementary health solutions. The company owns and operates 23 pharmacies in California, Colorado, New Mexico, Oregon and Washington. [www.pharmaca.com](http://www.pharmaca.com)