



# Great Lakes Clean Water Organization

[www.GreatLakesCleanWater.org](http://www.GreatLakesCleanWater.org)

NEWS RELEASE

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## **Yellow Jug Old Drugs Program Receives Financial Support from Northern Michigan Substance Abuse Services(NMSAS) and Covanta Energy to Expand to Northwest Michigan and Southeast Michigan**

Coordinated by Great Lakes Clean Water Organization, a Michigan based Non-Profit, the Yellow Jug Old Drugs program began in May 2009 in Northeast Michigan. The program has gone very well and is now expanding to provide the service to more communities in Michigan.

Up until now when a person wanted to dispose of unused/ unwanted/expired drugs the only option available in many communities was to flush down the drain or send to a landfill. In Michigan and across the country this has led to an emerging problem of trace amounts of chemicals showing up in our water. The Yellow Jug Old Drugs program is providing a positive solution to help address the issue. Individuals can bring unused/unwanted/expired drugs to participating pharmacies. Collected drugs are then taken to a Covanta Energy-from-Waste (EfW) facility for safe and proper disposal.

Chris Angel, President, Volunteer Board of Directors for Great Lakes Clean Water states. “Disposing of the drugs collected by the Yellow Jug Old Drugs program at a Covanta Energy-from-Waste facility ensures proper disposal with the added benefit of the energy produced in the process. The support Covanta has generously provided will help us expand the program to more communities throughout Michigan”

The Yellow Jug Old Drugs Program is currently available at pharmacies in Northeast Michigan, Bay City, the Thumb Area and in Northwest Michigan later this month. Funding from NMSAS is provided through the Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Task Force. This funding will allow the program to expand to Northwest Michigan. Great Lakes Clean Water and NMSAS will also be partnering to sponsor a workshop for law enforcement agencies on regulations regarding collection of controlled substances. Workshop is scheduled for September 8<sup>th</sup> in Gaylord.

The funding provided by Covanta Energy will assist Great Lakes Clean Water Organization to begin to offer the Yellow Jug Old Drugs program to communities in Southeast Michigan. Pharmacies in Wayne, Macomb and Oakland Counties will begin offering the program in May. Interested pharmacies who would like to participate in the Yellow Jug Old Drugs are encouraged to contact Great Lakes Clean Water for details.

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In addition to the funding provided by NMSAS and Covanta program costs are also supported by United Water, The Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan, support from local pharmacies and donations. There is no cost for individuals to bring unused/unwanted drugs to a participating pharmacy for proper disposal.

The program has been well received by pharmacists, customers and those concerned with the issue of safe and proper disposal of unused/unwanted drugs including Congressman Bart Stupak who has sponsored legislation on this issue.

Congressman Bart Stupak stated, "As drugs that are no longer needed sit around in household medicine cabinets, millions of Americans - particularly teenagers - are turning to these unused pharmaceuticals at an alarming rate as an alternative to illegal drugs," Stupak said. "By implementing a safe, controlled and environmentally-friendly means for disposing of unwanted drugs, we can make it harder for teens to abuse prescription drugs, while at the same time cleaning up our lakes, rivers and streams."

The Yellow Jug Old Drugs program accepts non-controlled drugs only at pharmacies. Participating pharmacies have a complete list of accepted/not accepted items and can help customers who have any questions. Locations and dates for collection of controlled substances coordinated by law enforcement agencies will be posted on website as received.

A complete list of participating pharmacies is available on the Great Lakes Clean Water website [www.greatlakescleanwater.org](http://www.greatlakescleanwater.org)

For more information on the Yellow Jug Old Drugs program go to [www.greatlakescleanwater.org](http://www.greatlakescleanwater.org) or call **989-736-8179**