



# Memorandum

## MONTEREY REGIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Reviewed by WMM Date 9/11/08  
General Manager

DATE: September 11, 2008  
TO: General Manager  
FROM: Public Education and Recycling Manager  
SUBJECT: Report on Public Education, Recycling and Litter Activities

### No Drugs Down the Drain State Campaign

This October 4<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>, Federal, State, Regional and Local agencies are working in partnership to promote a “No Drugs Down the Drain” campaign. This is in response to the fact that unused medications that are flushed down the toilet or placed in drains pass through the sewer system and eventually enter our streams, lakes, rivers, and oceans.

With tens of thousands of medicinal products on the market, and with more being developed each year, consumers need to understand that flushing expired or unused medications is not an acceptable disposal method. State and national solid waste and recycling associations increasingly support an approach to managing these materials that favors “producer responsibility”. In other words, consumers should be able to return these products to the place where they purchased them.

Locally, the following pharmacies take back expired and unused medications:

- ▶ Pharmaca, near Trader Joes, in Monterey
- ▶ Safeway, Del Rey Oaks
- ▶ Costco, Sand City and Salinas
- ▶ Star Pharmacy, Salinas

In addition, the MRWMD Household Hazardous Waste program will accept expired and unused medications from the public. However, District staff prefers that residents first consider properly disposing of these products in the trash. The Federal office of National Drug Control Policy offers these disposal guidelines:

- Take unused or expired drugs out of their original containers; mix prescription drugs with an undesirable substance such as coffee grounds or kitty litter, and place them in an impermeable, non-descript container such as a sealable bag or empty can, and place this in the trash; then recycle the original plastic container.

As previously reported to the MRWMD Board, Monterey County staff is seeking local law enforcement offices to host a secure pharmaceutical drug drop-off collection box. County staff will be presenting their model program to the Salinas City Council on October 7<sup>th</sup>.

### Coastal Cleanup Day is September 20, 2008

The 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Coastal Cleanup will take place on November 20<sup>th</sup> between 9 a.m. and noon. Last year, 1,400 volunteers turned out in Monterey County and collected more than 8,000 lbs of trash and 1,700 lbs of recyclables. Volunteers are needed at all local beaches and several beaches are still in need of site captains. Informational messages and a call for volunteers have been added in both the MRWMD website and the [www.KeepMontereyCountyClean.org](http://www.KeepMontereyCountyClean.org) website. Visit the State Parks website ([http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page\\_id=24587](http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=24587)) to learn more about Coastal Cleanup Day.

## Waste Reduction in the News

Employees of the Lush cosmetics store in Carmel-by-the-Sea staged an unusual event recently to call attention to overly-packaged products. As part of a nationwide protest at their 170 stores, Carmel employees reduced their own packaging (in the form of clothes) on August 27<sup>th</sup> as detailed in the article below excerpted from the Monterey County Herald. The company previously conducted a promotion on Earth Day with an employee dressed up as a "plastic bag monster". Those passing by that donated a plastic bag to the bag monster costume received a reusable shopping bag in return. This latest promotion didn't offer a giveaway but may have made a lasting visual impression. The store specializes in natural cosmetics and has made a corporate commitment to reducing waste and educating their customers.

### **Soap store's workers doff clothing to protest packaging**

By LAITH AGHA, Herald Staff Writer 8/28/08

*Daphne Engelken usually wears an apron at work. On Wednesday, that's all she wore. To promote their company's package-free approach to selling soap products, some employees at Lush Fresh Handmade Products stood outside the Carmel store, handing out information flyers and engaging passersby in conversation, all while wearing nothing but their aprons.*

*The simple attire, bearing the phrase "Ask me why I'm naked," hid their fronts but did little to obscure the rear views. "We're shedding our clothes to get products to shed their packaging," said manager-in-training Bridget Connole, 26, who along with store manager Engelken, 50, and saleswoman Brittany Hall, 19, spent half the noon hour in front of the store promoting — and mimicking — their products.*



*Lush's 170 North American stores, including its Carmel outlet, took part in the promotion, one of several installments of a campaign to encourage consumers to reduce waste. "We need to be making conscious decisions to save our planet for our children," Engelken said. The "naked" campaign focused on reducing product packaging. Earlier this year, the Bag Monster visited Lush to frighten consumers out of using plastic bags. The store's next planned promotion, "Soap Wars," will take on liquid soaps, which are contained in plastic bottles, in contrast to the store's unwrapped soap bars, said employee Halsey Disario.*

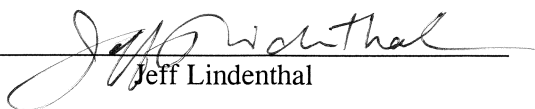
*Lush has not stripped all of its products of their packaging, but it is moving in that direction. A little more than half the products are sold without any covering. The store intends to have 70 percent product nudity by the end of the year, Engelken said.*

*The women maintained a level of modesty, spending most of the publicity stunt with their backs to the storefront. But on a few occasions — when Engelken reached in the store for more brochures or Hall took a couple steps down the sidewalk to offer consumer information to a fully clothed tourist — eyelids jumped as a bare bottom came into view. "We're a conservative little town," Engelken said. "It's all for a good reason. The initiative is honest and forthright."*

*Some people walking by were unfazed by the partially clad soap pushers. Others wore looks of bewilderment or curious amusement. A Seattle couple had mixed reactions as they passed the store. Lori Iles did not bother to stop to find out what the Lush ladies were up to. "I'm not sure what it's about," she said. "I don't really want to find out." Her husband viewed things differently. "I think it's beautiful," Barry Iles said. "I find it refreshing."*

## Strategic Planning Impact

A6a: Program focus on public awareness, increased diversion of organics and commercial wastes, proper management of hazardous and prohibited materials, litter abatement, and sustainability.

  
Jeff Lindenthal