Identification of Expired Medical Materials – Color Code System
Research Animal Resources Center

The use of expired medical materials is prohibited in any survival procedure performed on live vertebrate animals used for research or teaching*. In order to abide by legal regulations, these materials must be regularly segregated and/or disposed of to ensure they are not erroneously used in research animals. It is now required, by RARC Veterinary Staff, that labs conduct a monthly self-assessment to ensure this is done in a timely manner. We are providing Principal Investigators and their labs with an option for a system to help do this.

This system involves the use of colored dot stickers applied to any item with an expiration date. Each color corresponds with a different year (Figure 1) and the month of expiration is written in the center (Figure 2). To ensure outdated materials are never used in your lab, it is best to look through all medical materials on a regular basis and dispose of any items due to expire. For example, at the end of June 2017 your lab should search for and dispose of any items with a blue sticker and the number 6 written in the center. You may also want to document your monthly self-assessments.

E-mail the RARC Pharmacy (pharmacy@rarc.wisc.edu) to obtain colored stickers and key codes to post in your lab.

*NOTE!!!
With proper protocol approval, expired medical materials may be used for acute terminal studies in which the health and wellbeing of the vertebrate animal is not affected and the scientific integrity of the experiment is not jeopardized. These materials must be labeled appropriately and stored in a physically separate area from non-expired materials.

Under no circumstance can expired anesthesia, analgesia, euthanasia or emergency drugs be used in any vertebrate animal.

You can also contact the RARC Pharmacy for special stickers to label:
1. Expired materials to be used in terminal procedures (Figure 3)
2. Expired materials being stored until they can be properly disposed of (Figure 4)

References
Figure 1

EXPIRED MATERIALS!
FOR USE ONLY IN TERMINAL PROCEDURES

*Color indicates year and number written in center indicates month of expiration.

Figure 2

Isoflurane

Figure 2: Example of an item that expires in June 2018

EXPIRED!
DO NOT USE AWAITING DISPOSAL

Research Animal Resources Center
396 Enzyme Institute  University of Wisconsin-Madison  1710 University Avenue  Madison, WI 53726-4087
608/262-1238  Fax: 608/265-2698  Email: help@rarc.wisc.edu  http://www.rarc.wisc.edu