Tips for Preventing Expired Drugs and Medical Materials

Federal regulations and guidelines prohibit the use of expired drugs and medical materials on live animals. Stay in compliance by following these tips:

- Use the color code system to spot expiring items at a glance. For each item with an expiration date, follow RARC’s chart [scan the QR code below for the most recent version] and apply a colored dot sticker that corresponds to the year of expiration.

  Then write the month of expiration in the center.

  ![Example, RARC color code chart]

  For more details visit www.rarc.wisc.edu/tools_and_guides/drugs/expired_drugs.html

  Scan this code to see the latest version of RARC's color code chart:

- Apply the stickers when new drugs/materials arrive. Consider having one lab member in charge of this task.

- Assign one person to check for expiration dates at the end of each month. Use calendars, notes, electronic reminders, etc. as reminders to complete this task every month.

- Centralize all your drugs and materials that expire in one location or limit the number of locations where materials are kept.

- If materials with different expiration dates are stored together, label the container with a dot representing the soonest expiration year and change it as materials expire.

- When you find expired drugs or materials, dispose of them according to the instructions below or place them in a separate location away from the in-date materials. Label the bottle, box, or drawer “EXPIRED DO NOT USE ON LIVE ANIMALS.” *
o For expired powders, liquids, capsules, gels, ointments, etc. that are NOT controlled substances, complete the chemical disposal form at the UW Chemical Safety website at
https://ehs.wisc.edu/disposal-services/chemical-disposal/chemical-disposal-surplus-pick-up-form/ and they will pick up your items.

o For disposal of expired controlled drugs, contact APAS@rarc.wisc.edu for instructions.

o For expired syringes, scalpel blades, sutures, catheters and other sharps, place them in a red sharps container*.

o For expired sterilized gauze, gloves, bandages, other non-sharps, and non-pharmaceutical items, throw them in the trash*.

o Consult Chemical Safety’s Disposal Services webpage at https://ehs.wisc.edu/disposal-services/ for more information.

- Contact pharmacy@rarc.wisc.edu for a color-coded dot system starter kit, controlled substance guidance, or helpful advice on managing your drug and medical materials inventory.

*You may use expired items (except anesthetics, analgesics, rescue or euthanasia drugs) for terminal procedures only. These items must be segregated from in-date drugs and labeled “for terminal use only.”