

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
AND SHEILA KUEHL**

November 22, 2016

**Input from Experts to Guide Pharmaceutical and Sharps Collection and Disposal
Stewardship Policy**

At the November 1, 2016 meeting of the Los Angeles County (County) Board of Supervisors, the Board received and filed a report on the status of pharmaceutical and sharps collection and disposal efforts. As part of their report, representatives from the Departments of Public Health (DPH) and Public Works (DPW), on behalf of the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Working Group, provided an update on their efforts to engage the Pharmaceutical Industry in an education and outreach campaign and expanding collection events across the County. The report made clear that the pharmaceutical industry had not fulfilled the requests for solutions posed by the Board. As a consequence, after over eighteen months of engagement in the development of a proposed Pharmaceutical and Sharps Collection and Disposal Stewardship Ordinance (Ordinance), there remains a lack of consensus among members of the Board on the most productive path forward.

The initial motivation behind developing the proposed Ordinance was to reduce the amount of expired and unused medication that is currently being stockpiled and disposed of in an unsafe manner. While such an ordinance would conceptually be consistent with the Board’s policy of supporting EPR, the data and evidence presented

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to the Board to date is not sufficiently clear to allow the Board to best evaluate and meet the public health and waste management goals of this significant policy change.

For example, DPW has raised concerns about the potential long-term impacts of pharmaceuticals entering the water stream, but analysis thus far is inconclusive about the potential impacts. DPH estimates that approximately 600 individuals die in the County each year due to drug-related deaths, and that an estimated 75 percent of residents who misuse prescription drugs obtain them from relatives or friends. However, it is unclear whether, or in what forms, performance-based take back programs consistent with the proposed Ordinance presented to the Board on June 14, 2015, are proven strategies to meaningfully address these issues.

Qualified academics, researchers, and scientists should be engaged to evaluate the efficacy and evidence associated with the issues presented by the proposed (or similar) Ordinances as they relate to health, water quality, and other issues, to allow the Board to adequately opine on appropriate next steps.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Direct the Interim Director of the Department of Public Health, in collaboration with the Director of the Department of Public Works or their designee, on behalf of the Extended Producer Responsibility Working Group, to consult with technical experts that can review and provide input on the proposed Los Angeles County Pharmaceutical and Sharps Collection and Disposal Stewardship Ordinance (Ordinance). The Interim Director of the Department of Public Health should then issue a written report to the Board of Supervisors within 120 days that summarizes pertinent findings and recommendations, including a discussion of available data that supports the approach of the Ordinance or similar ordinances that have been implemented in other jurisdictions.

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