

# NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR PHARMACY BOARD

## Guidelines for Pharmacy Practice



### Destruction of Expired or Unusable Narcotics and Controlled Drugs

February 3, 2010

## Introduction

Until recently, the Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board has been issuing authorization letters for the destruction of narcotics and other controlled substances to pharmacies upon written request. However, on February 1, 2010, the Board received communication from the Manager of the Compliance, Monitoring and Liaison Division of the Office of Controlled Substances indicating that this process was not consistent with the current regulatory context and asked us to inform pharmacists that any further requests should be forwarded to their attention.

As such, the Board will no longer authorize requests for destruction of narcotics and controlled drugs. Instead, we have prepared a revised version of our form, "*Request to Destroy Drugs Covered by the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*" as well as these guidelines for pharmacists-in-charge.

## Guidelines

- Before destroying any expired or unusable narcotics or controlled drugs, a request for "Authorization to Destroy" must be sent to the Office of Controlled Substances by faxing or mailing a letter requesting authorization to:

Compliance, Monitoring and Liaison Division  
Office of Controlled Substances  
Drug Strategy and Controlled Substances Program  
Health Canada  
Address Locator: 3502B  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1B9  
Facsimile: (613) 957-0110  
Telephone: (613) 954-1541 (for clarification purposes only)

This letter must include:

- the pharmacy's full name and address,
- the pharmacist's full name (printed) and license number, and
- a list of the drugs to be destroyed including:
  - the name and strength of each drug,
  - quantities of each drug, and
  - lot numbers and expiry dates of each drugs

There must be separate lists drugs from inventory and for any drugs that may have been returned by patients.

To facilitate this process, the NLPB has prepared a letter template that can be used by pharmacists-in-charge to ensure that all information is included. This template is available on the NLPB website under "[Miscellaneous Forms](#)."

- Once written "Authorization to Destroy" is received from Health Canada, the drugs may be disposed of in one of three ways:
  - They may be returned to the licensed dealer who sold/provided them;
  - They may be shipped to a licensed dealer that is authorized to destroy products containing a narcotic or controlled drug; or
  - They may be destroyed at the pharmacy premises. The destruction must take place in the presence of a witness who should be either another pharmacist or a practitioner and documents pertaining to the destruction must be kept on site for a period of two years from the date of destruction.
- Authorization is not required to destroy benzodiazepines and other targeted substances. However, witnessed records including the name, strength per unit and quantity of the targeted substance destroyed must be kept on site for two years.