

AB 1442 (Wieckowski)

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Common Carriers

PROBLEM

Under existing law, pharmaceutical drugs can be sent to healthcare facilities (HCFs) through standard common carriers, or standard shipping means. Unused drugs can sometimes be returned to the manufacturer for credit, via a common carrier. Expired and non-dispensable drugs must be shipped as “Medical Waste”, requiring expensive hazardous waste shipping, instead of common carrier. This is unnecessarily expensive for pharmacies, hospitals, and other health care facilities, who are simply returning the exact same drug that was shipped to them by common carrier.

THIS BILL

The proposed changes to the California Medical Waste Management Act (MWMA) (Health and Safety Code Sections 117600-118360) would allow HCFs to ship all non-dispensable (unwanted) pharmaceuticals designated as “Medical Waste” under the MWMA to permitted Medical Waste Transfer Stations or Treatment Facilities via common carriers for proper processing in accordance with all applicable federal, state and local laws. Presently a substantial portion of unwanted pharmaceuticals at HCF’s that are not designated as hazardous under federal law must be handled as Medical Waste under state law. This substantially increases the processing and transportation costs associated with disposing of the unwanted pharmaceuticals and encourages HCF’s to illegally dispose of the pharmaceuticals via the trash or sewer system.

SUMMARY

In short, under the MWMA, HCF’s must process the same unwanted pharmaceutical in different ways and at substantially different costs depending on whether the pharmaceutical drug may be returned to the manufacturer for credit. In light of the risk to the California water supply and environment, allowing HCF’s to utilize common carriers for the transportation of all unwanted pharmaceuticals simply makes sense.

FACTS

- Reverse distribution helps business and healthcare facilities save money by returning drugs to pharmaceutical companies for recycling/disposal.
- Reverse distribution helps the environment and water supply by encouraging proper disposal instead of drugs ending up in trash or the sewer system.

STATUS

Introduced January 4th, 2012

Assembly Committee on Environmental Safety & Toxic Materials- March 20, 2012

SUPPORT

EXP Pharmaceutical Services Corp.
Fremont Chamber of Commerce

OPPOSITION

None on File

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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