Spain has provided consumers with collection and disposal of unused medicines through the non-profit organization SIGRE since 2001. SIGRE collects unused medications and their packaging for proper disposal, this program does not cover the disposal of sharps. By law all costs associated with pharmaceutical collection and disposal is covered by pharmaceutical manufacturers.

Organizing Body: SIGRE was created in 2001 by pharmaceutical manufacturers, the program is supported by pharmacies and pharmaceutical distribution companies. SIGRE works in collaboration with pharmaceutical companies (Consejo General De Colegios Oficiales De Farmaceuticos, Farmaindustria, fedifar, etc.).

SIGRE was created as a response to current European and Spanish health and environment legislation regarding the management of household hazardous waste.

Costs & Funding: Costs of collecting unused medicines is financed by fees paid by pharmaceutical manufacturers on each container sold in pharmacies.

There are over 300 pharmaceutical manufacturers committed to funding SIGRE’s operations, view the full list.

Program Facts: SIGRE focuses on eliminating waste by educating pharmaceutical manufacture on how to design and produce sustainable packaging.

In addition to collected unwanted or unused medicines, SIGRE collects empty pharmaceutical packaging to dispose of separately. Consumers can dispose of their empty packaging at any SIGRE collection location.

SIGRE Treatment of Pharmaceutical Waste
- Recycled: 64.53%
- Energy Recovery: 34.42%
- Incineration: 1.05%

Picture (above): Before SIGRE packaging recommendations vs. after.
Collection Locations & Accessibility:

- **89% of Spanish households** know of a SIGRE collection location near them.6

- **99% of the population has at least one SIGRE collection location** in their municipality.7

- Currently there are **more than 21,200 participating pharmacies** serving as SIGRE collection locations.

- An [interactive map](#) of collection locations is located on the SIGRE website.7

Timeline:

**April 1997:** Pharmaceutical manufacturers are held accountable for the correct management of packaging waste from their products by [Law 11/1997](#) published in the BOE.10

**December 2001:** SIGRE was established as a non-profit organization by pharmaceutical industry.1

**July 2011:** Spain obliges all pharmaceutical manufactures to ensure the proper channels of disposal with regard to [Law 11/2011](#) (environmental and contaminated soil legislation).11

**January 2006:** [Law 29/2006](#) requires pharmaceutical manufacturers to treat unused or unwanted medications.12

Reference List