



International Pharmaceutical EPR Program Fact Sheet

Organizing Body: Bonusage (www.bonusage.be), is a part of Pharma.be (pharma.be), a non-profit organization that represents the pharmaceutical industry in Belgium.¹ Bonusage is organized by the following groups:

- Pharmaceutical wholesalers²
- Pharmaceutical manufacturers²
- Regional environmental agencies²

Program Description: The collection and disposal of pharmaceutical waste in Belgium first began in 2000, and was implemented in the Brussels region in 2002. This system is organized through a partnership of the pharmaceutical wholesalers, pharmaceutical manufacturers, and pharmacies in collaboration with regional environmental agencies. Funding is divided amongst pharmaceutical wholesalers and the pharmaceutical manufacturers.¹

Funding: Funded entirely by the pharmaceutical industry comprised of wholesalers and manufactures.¹

- Pharmaceutical wholesalers are required to cover the cost of collection, storage and transportation to disposal sites¹
- Pharmaceutical manufacturers are responsible for the cost of incinerating the pharmaceutical waste based on market share¹
- Since 2005, pharmaceutical manufacturers also pay a fee for each waste container ordered from the wholesalers¹

Program Costs: 2011: Approximately **USD \$106,311** (EUR €90,000³) to dispose of **206 tons** (186,908 kg) in the region of Wallonia,¹ which calculates to approximately USD \$0.27 per pound. A third of Belgium's population lives in Wallonia.⁴

¹ "Unused Pharmaceuticals Where Do They End Up? A Snapshot of European Collection Schemes." *Healthcare Without Harm*, accessed January 2015, [Web](#), 12.

² "Médicaments périmés et non utilisés: Votre pharmacien les récupère! (Outdated and Unused Drugs: Pharmacist Recovers!)" *Bonusage.be*, accessed January 2015, [Web](#).

³ *XE Currency Converter*, accessed January 8 2015, [Web](#).

⁴ Belien, Paul. "Crisis in Belgium: If Flanders Secedes Wallonia Disintegrates" *Brussels Journal*, last modified 9 Sept 2007, accessed January 2015, [Web](#).



Program Chronology:

- 2000: System officially begins⁵
- 2002: System implemented in the Brussels region ([Arrêté du Gouvernement de la Région de Bruxelles Capitale 2002/31400](#))⁶
- Before 2005, waste products could be returned to hazardous waste sites and specific drop off locations⁵
- After 2005, waste products could only be returned to pharmacies⁵

Collection Locations: Pharmacies are obligated to participate in the system. If they do not, citizens can file a complaint with the regional environmental agency.⁵

Results:

- 2000-2011: Total amount of waste collected increased by 33%, or an average of 2.5% per year⁵
- 2011: **631 tons** (572 metric tons) of unused medication were returned in all of Belgium; an average of **245 lbs** (111 kg) per pharmacy⁸⁴ In the specific region of Wallonia, 15,776 medicine containers were collected from pharmacies. This amounted to a total weight of **206 tons** (186,908 kg) with an average of **.11 lbs** (≈53 g) per citizen⁵



Bonusage Informational Flyer ([Bonusage Website](#))

⁵ “Unused Pharmaceuticals Where Do They End Up?”, 12.

⁶ “Arrêté du Gouvernement de la Région de Bruxelles Capitale 2002/31400 (Order of the Government of the Brussels Region 2002/31400).” *Belgisch Staatsblad*. last modified 27 Sept. 2002, accessed January 2015, [Web](#).