

April 26, 2012

Karen Cotton  
309.566.4126  
karen.cotton@amwater.com

## **Illinois American Water Partners with City of Columbia and Columbia Police Department to Implement Pharmaceutical Disposal Program**

### ***Program to kick off on May 2, 2012***

Belleville, Ill. (April 26, 2012) – Illinois American Water has partnered with the City of Columbia and Columbia Police Department to implement a pharmaceutical disposal program in Columbia. Illinois American Water donated the pharmaceutical drop box, which will be installed with a kick-off event at the Columbia Police Department, located at 1020 North Main Street Columbia, Ill. on May 2, 2012 at 9:30 a.m.

Residents are encouraged to drop off their unwanted meds so they can be incinerated, which is the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) recommended approach for pharmaceutical disposal. Flushing medications down the toilet or the drain as well as throwing them in the trash are discouraged.

"This program not only protects our water supply; it also protects our children from prescription drug abuse. Keeping our children and our water supply safe is critical to our community's future," said Columbia Mayor Kevin Hutchinson.

The Columbia pharmaceutical disposal program is the 28<sup>th</sup> program supported through Illinois American Water's initiatives. "Our goal is to prevent the flushing of medications through a network of secure pharmaceutical collection centers across the state," said Karla Olson Teasley, president of Illinois American Water.

Illinois American Water has been recognized by American Water Works Association (AWWA) with the 2011 Communications Achievement Award for the company's outreach regarding proper pharmaceutical disposal. Founded in 1881, AWWA is the authoritative resource for knowledge, information, and advocacy for improving the quality and supply of water. The award recognizes AWWA member organizations for fostering and supporting the development of public outreach programs and integrating public affairs as a core element of utility management.

Through partnership and collaboration with local pharmacies, police departments and government officials, Illinois American Water has implemented and supported pharmaceutical disposal programs in Alton, Bartonville, Belleville, Caseyville, Champaign, Chicago (two sites), Chillicothe, Collinsville, Dixon, Fairmont, Maryville, Morrison, Mt. Vernon, O'Fallon, Orland Hills, Pekin, Peoria (three sites), Peoria Heights, Pontiac, South Beloit, Sterling, Streator, Urbana and Waterloo.

The pharmaceutical disposal programs were created through a model developed by Pontiac High School Township students and their teacher Paul Ritter. The program, P2D2, has been recognized by Illinois Governor Pat Quinn, the Illinois EPA and the Department of Natural Resources as a model for all pharmaceutical disposal programs. Through P2D2's efforts, thousands of pounds of unwanted medications have been collected and disposed of properly. To learn more, please visit [www.epa.state.il.us/medication-disposal](http://www.epa.state.il.us/medication-disposal).

### **About Illinois American Water**

Illinois American Water, a wholly owned subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), is the largest investor-owned water utility in the state, providing high-quality and reliable water and/or wastewater services to more than 1.2 million people. American Water also operates a customer service center in Alton and a quality control and research laboratory in Belleville. Founded in 1886, American Water is the largest publicly traded U.S. water and wastewater utility company. With headquarters in Voorhees, N.J., the company employs more than 7,000 dedicated professionals who provide drinking water, wastewater and other related services to approximately 15 million people in more than 30 states, as well as parts of Canada. More information can be found by visiting [www.amwater.com](http://www.amwater.com).

###