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**TACKLING THE CHALLENGE OF PHARMACEUTICALS INTO THE ENVIRONMENT**

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**ABSTRACT:** The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) has a unique role with the issue of pharmaceuticals in the environment (“PIE”), since CDPHE includes both health and environmental programs. The issue of PIE is considered an emerging contaminant and impacts from PIE are beginning to be established. CDPHE is in the process of undertaking a variety of initiatives to address this important environmental and public health challenge, including the development of various pollution prevention programs, outreach and education activities, a pilot “take back program” of unused medications, etc. In addition, CDPHE has worked to understand the potential human health risk associated with unwanted releases of pharmaceuticals into the environment. These PIE activities are being addressed at CDPHE through an Environmental Problem Solving (EPS) model. This presentation will discuss these PIE efforts and will include an estimate of environmental benefits from such activities. The presentation will also highlight how the EPS model is being used accordingly.

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