

U.S. Department of Justice

*Drug Enforcement  
Administration*  
ATLANTA FIELD DIVISION  
HARRY S. SOMMERS,  
SPECIAL AGENT IN  
CHARGE  
[www.dea.gov](http://www.dea.gov)



## ***NEWS RELEASE***

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## **DEA OFFICE IN COLUMBIA, S. CAROLINA HOLDING ITS FOURTH NATIONWIDE PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE-BACK DAY SATURDAY**

**Columbia, SC** – The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Columbia District Office is partnering with national, state, local, and tribal law enforcement officials, as well as community coalition groups, to hold a fourth National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day. This one-day event will make it convenient for the public to rid their homes of potentially dangerous prescription drugs.

On Saturday, April 28, 2012 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., South Carolinians will be able to drop off their expired, unused, and unwanted pills at sites across the state free of charge, no questions asked. By doing so, they will help prevent drug abuse and theft.

Last year, on October 29, 2011, DEA and its state and local law enforcement and community partners held its third national prescription drug take back event. During DEA's statewide event, approximately 3,302.5 pounds of unwanted or expired medications were collected at numerous sites throughout South Carolina for safe and proper disposal.

This initiative addresses a vital public safety and public health issue. Medicines that languish in home cabinets are highly susceptible to diversion, misuse, and abuse. Rates of prescription drug abuse in the U.S. are alarmingly high--more Americans currently abuse prescription drugs than the number of those using cocaine, hallucinogens, and heroin combined, according to the 2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Studies show that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including from the home medicine cabinet.

Harry S. Sommers, the Special Agent in Charge of the DEA Atlanta Field Division commented, "This campaign provides a safe and environmentally sound way for Americans to dispose of their unwanted prescription drugs. DEA is banding together with a multitude of community and law enforcement partners to show our commitment to decrease the rise in addiction caused by pharmaceutical drugs. By working together, we will eliminate a major source for abused prescription drugs and make our communities safer."

The public can find a nearby collection site by visiting [www.dea.gov](http://www.dea.gov), clicking on the "Got Drugs?" icon, and following the links to a database, where they enter their zip code. Law enforcement agencies interested in operating one or more collection sites on April 28 can register with the DEA by clicking on the above-cited "Got Drugs?" icon and calling the DEA POC for their state, which can be under the link for law enforcement.

Four days after last fall's event, Congress passed the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act of 2010, which amends the Controlled Substances Act to allow an "ultimate user" of controlled substance medications to dispose of them by delivering them to entities authorized by the Attorney General to accept them. The Act also allows the Attorney General to authorize long term care facilities to dispose of their residents' controlled substances in certain instances. DEA is in the process of drafting regulations to implement the Act.

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