



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, April 28, 2010
<http://www.justice.gov/usao/ias/>

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Over 4,700 Sites Join DEA's Nationwide Effort to Take-Back Prescription Drugs on April 30

DES MOINES, IA – United States Attorney, Nicholas A. Klinefeldt, announced support for the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA's) Second National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day which is this Saturday, April 30. More than 4,700 sites nationwide have joined the effort that seeks to prevent pill abuse and theft, which is substantially more sites than were established for the event last fall. The free event will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. local time.

Government, community, public health and law enforcement partners at these sites will be working together to collect expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs that are potentially dangerous if left in the family's medicine cabinet.

Last September, Americans turned in over 242,000 pounds—121 tons—of prescription drugs at nearly 4,100 sites operated by more than 3,000 of the DEA's state and local law enforcement partners. Also last fall, Congress passed the Safe and Secure Drug Disposal Act of 2010, which amends the Controlled Substances Act to allow users 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 presently drafting regulations to implement the Act.

Collection sites in every local community can be found by going to www.dea.gov and clicking on the "Got Drugs?" banner at the top of the home page, which connects to a database that citizens can search by zip code, city or county. This site is continuously updated with new

take-back locations. In addition, interested media can now go to: www.nationaltakebackday.com to download a public service announcement about the initiative.

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 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Studies show that individuals that abuse prescription drugs often obtained them from family and friends, including from the home medicine cabinet. In addition, many Americans do not know how to properly dispose of their unused medicine, often flushing them down the toilet or throwing them away – both potential safety and health hazards.

“The overwhelming public response to DEA's First Nationwide Take-Back event last fall not only rid homes of potentially harmful prescription drugs, but was an unprecedented opportunity to educate everyone about the growing prescription drug abuse problem," said DEA Administrator Michele Leonhart. “Studies have shown that, for many, prescription drugs are the very first drugs they abuse—and all too often they aren't the last. That is why we are committed to helping Americans keep their homes safe by ridding their medicine cabinets of expired, unused, and unwanted drugs.”

“I encourage every American to take advantage of this valuable opportunity to safely dispose of unused, un-needed, or expired prescription drugs,” said Gil Kerlikowse, Director of National Drug Control Policy. “Preventing these readily available and potentially deadly drugs from being diverted and misused is something each and every one of us can do to help reduce the epidemic of prescription drug abuse that is harming so many Americans.”

Other participants in this initiative include the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy; the American Association of Poison Control Centers; the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America; D.A.R.E. America; the Federation of State Medical Boards; the U. S. Health Resources and Services Administration; the International Association of Chiefs of Police; the National Association of Attorneys General; the National Family Partnership; the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives; the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy; the National District Attorneys Association; the National Sheriffs Association; and The Partnership at Drugfree.org.

Review of the web sites, above, are encouraged. Specific questions about the local initiative should be directed to:

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