



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SECOND NATIONWIDE PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE-BACK DAY A SUCCESS IN THE NORTH COUNTRY

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[Plattsburgh, New York]—United States Attorney Richard S. Hartunian, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council and the District Attorneys in Franklin, Clinton, Essex and St. Lawrence Counties, today announced outstanding North Country participation in the second nationwide Prescription Drug Take-Back Day on April 30, 2011. The Prescription Drug Take-Back Day promotes drug abuse prevention and public safety by providing the community with an environmentally-safe, no-questions asked location to turn in prescription drugs that are no longer needed or are expired. Eighteen North Country jurisdictions participated in the April 30 event during which a total of 451.5 pounds of prescription drugs were collected for safe disposal with 123 pounds from nursing homes and long-term care facilities.

DEA officials, the United States Attorney's Office, the four North Country District Attorneys, and the participating law enforcement agencies promoted the Pill Take Back Event as a way to raise community awareness and assistance in prevention of prescription drug abuse and criminal targeting of homes in which prescription drugs may be found. In the North Country, law enforcement, public service agencies and drug treatment services are attempting to cope with and respond to what has been termed an "epidemic" in prescription abuse with rates of abuse in the North Country among the highest per capita in New York.

Community outreach and participation resulted in the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Police Department having the single most productive community turn-in site during the event. St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Police Chief Andrew Thomas stated that his department approached the event as a public safety and community awareness opportunity, and his community responded strongly to the

anti-drug message. Essex County community members had the highest overall submission by weight of drugs turned in with eight manned locations during the event. This year nursing homes and long term-care facilities also participated with expansion expected in the next event. Participating agencies also included the following listed in order of amount of pills safely taken from the community during this event: Clinton County Sheriff's Office; St. Lawrence County Sheriff's Office; Potsdam Police Department; Plattsburgh Police Department; Malone Police Department; Ogdensburg Police Department; SUNY Plattsburgh Police Department; Lake Placid Police Department; Massena Police Department; Moriah Police Department; and SUNY Potsdam Police Department.

The DEA and participating agencies plan a similar event in October 2011.

Any questions may be directed to Assistant U.S. Attorney Elizabeth Horsman, Plattsburgh, 518-314-7800, or DEA Resident Agent in Charge David Leu, Plattsburgh, at 518-562-6900.