

National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day hopes to raise awareness, reduce risk for opioid addictions

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EDWARDSVILLE – For law enforcement agencies across **Madison County** and beyond, reducing the risk of prescription drug addiction and overdose is one of their top priorities.

In conjunction with the nationwide initiative led by the **U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)**, the **Madison County Government** and various other locations throughout the county urged residents to bring in their expired, unwanted and unused prescription medications for disposal during **National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day**.

Steve Nonn, Madison County Coroner, has seen his fair share of overdoses due to prescription drugs.

“Statistically, over 70 percent of youth who are first exposed to prescription drugs are exposed through family and friends,” Nonn said. “They’re getting them out of their grandparents’ medicine cabinets. It’s also been shown that prescription drugs are a gateway to heroin. Nationally, as prescription drug addictions have risen, so have heroin addictions.”

Tom Gibbons, Madison County State’s Attorney, believes that this type of event is incredibly important to combating the problem with drug addiction in Madison County.

“We collect thousands of pounds of prescriptions,” Gibbons said. “This is a way for a lot of citizens to get these things out of their homes and out of the system so they can know that they are not going to be a source of someone to get these harmful substances.”



Residents were welcome to drop off any of their unwanted prescription medicines at special locations, such as behind the **Madison County Administration Building** and the **Shop N' Save** off Troy Rd, between **10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday**.

“This is our way of getting unwanted prescription drugs out of homes so that one doesn't become an accidental drug dealer,” Nonn said.

The drugs, which are now out of the homes away from possible abusers, are to be incinerated.

If you had missed out on this nationwide Drug Take-Back Day event, do not worry. There is an unwanted drug disposal drop box in 15 different police stations around the county, including **Alton, Bethalto, Collinsville, East Alton, Edwardsville, Glen Carbon, Granite City, Highland, Maryville, Roxana, Madison, SIUE Police, Troy and the Wood River Police Departments. Madison County Sherrif's Department** also hosts a drop box for unwanted medications.

Any over-the-counter medications, vitamins, liquids, narcotics, cough syrup, prescription medicines, hormones, painkillers, antibiotics, ointments, oils and any unidentifiable pills will be accepted anonymously and with no questions asked.

The drop boxes, however, do not accept oxygen tanks, asthma inhalers, mercury thermometers, hearing aids, household wastes and sharps or needles.