

National Drug Take-Bake Initiative scheduled for Oct. 22

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EDWARDSVILLE - State's Attorney Tom Gibbons, Coroner Steve Nonn, and Sheriff John Lakin are once again encouraging Madison County residents to bring their expired, or unwanted, prescription or over-the-counter medications to Edwardsville as part of the National Take-Back Initiative sponsored by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). The service is free and anonymous, no questions asked.

As part of Gibbons' ongoing participation in the Lock Your Meds public outreach campaign, he is once more co-sponsoring a prescription drug collection site at the County Administration Building in Edwardsville with Nonn and Lakin as part of the upcoming National Take-Back Initiative scheduled for October 22, 2016. There will be free prescription lock bags to the first 10 individuals who bring their medications to the site.

Last April, Americans turned in 447 tons (over 893,000 pounds) of prescription drugs at almost 5,400 sites operated by the DEA and more than 4,200 of its state and local law enforcement partners. Overall, in its 11 previous Take Back events, DEA and its

partners have taken in over 6.4 million pounds—about 3,200 tons—of pills. Many local police departments in Madison County, including the Sheriff's Department, have permanent drop-off sites available for residents. A list of these sites can be found at http://www.co.madison.il.us/document_center/States_Attorney/LockUpMeds/Perm_site_drop_offs_October2015.pdf.

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, as are the number of accidental poisonings and overdoses due to these drugs. Studies show that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including from the home medicine cabinet.

For more information on Lock Your Meds, visit the State's Attorney website at www.madco-sa.org. Other local police departments participating in National Take-Back Day include Edwardsville, East Alton, Alton, Highland, and Maryville. More information on those locations can be found at http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/index.html.