

DEA Holds 20th National Prescription Drug Take Back Day Saturday

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ST. LOUIS– The Drug Enforcement Administration is holding its 20th Take Back Day and invites the public to safely turn in expired, unused or unwanted prescription drugs at designated collection sites from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, April 24, National Prescription Take-Back Day.

With studies indicating a majority of abused prescription drugs come from family and friends, including from home medicine cabinets, clearing out unused medicine is essential.

“Prescription medications often end up in the wrong hands, fueling an epidemic that kills more Americans than car accidents,” said Special Agent in Charge Todd L.

Zimmerman, head of DEA's division responsible for the states of Missouri and Kansas, as well as southern Illinois. "We have about 200 police departments in our region participating in this national event. That means everyone has the opportunity to help prevent drug abuse by cleaning out their medicine cabinets."

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. has seen an increase in overdose deaths during the COVID-19 pandemic, with 87,200 Americans dying as a result of a drug overdose in a one-year period (Sept. 1, 2019 to Sept. 1, 2020), the most ever recorded in a 12-month period. The increase in drug overdose deaths appeared to begin prior to the COVID-19 health emergency, accelerating significantly during the first months of the pandemic.

The public can drop off potentially dangerous prescription medications at collection sites which will adhere to local COVID-19 guidelines and regulations in order to maintain the safety of all participants and local law enforcement.

DEA and its partners will collect tablets, capsules, patches, and other solid forms of prescription drugs. Liquids (including intravenous solutions), syringes and other sharps, and illegal drugs will not be accepted. DEA will continue to accept vaping devices and cartridges at its drop-off locations provided lithium batteries are removed.

Helping people dispose of potentially harmful prescription drugs is just one way DEA is working to reduce addiction and stem overdose deaths.

Find a location or learn more about National Prescription Take Back Day at www.deatakeback.com.