



PRESS RELEASE

From the office of:
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Anoka County Sheriff's Office Taking Back Unwanted Prescription Drugs

On Saturday, October 26, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. the Anoka County Sheriff's Office and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration will give the public its 18th opportunity in nine years to prevent pill abuse and theft by ridding their homes of potentially dangerous expired, unused and unwanted prescription drugs. Bring your pills for disposal to the Anoka County Sheriff's Office at 13301 Hanson Blvd. NW, Andover, MN 55304. (Sites cannot accept liquids, needles or sharps, only pills or patches.) As part of this year's National Prescription Drug Take Back Initiative, e-cigarettes and other vaping devices will be accepted (devices can only be accepted if the batteries have been removed). The service is free and anonymous, no questions asked.

Last fall Americans turned in nearly 469 tons (more than 937,000 pounds) of prescription drugs at nearly 6,300 sites operated by the DEA and almost 5,000 of its state and local law enforcement partners. Overall, in its 17 previous Take Back events, DEA and its partners have taken in more than 11.8 million pounds—approximately 5,900 tons—of pills.

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 United States are alarmingly high, as are the number of accidental poisonings and overdoses due to these drugs. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Survey on Drug Use and Health shows year after year that the majority of misused and abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including someone else's medication being stolen from the home medicine cabinet. In addition, Americans are now advised that their usual methods for disposing of unused medicines—flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the trash—both pose potential safety and health hazards.

According to Sheriff James Stuart, "The Prescription Drug Take Back Program is another important way that we can all partner to keep drugs out of the wrong hands and to keep our communities a safer place. Since the inception of our *Prescription Drug Take Back program*, the Anoka County Sheriff's Office has collected more than 28,521 pounds of unused prescription medications. That directly correlates to youth not being exposed to prescription drugs and lives not being destroyed by it. We are excited to continue working with our citizens and pursue positive outcomes!" The Anoka County Sheriff's Office partners with the DEA annually for this event, but we want to remind the public that unused prescription drugs can be disposed of at our Office, Monday through Friday regularly during business hours 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For more information about the disposal of prescription drugs or about the October 26th Take Back Day event, go to www.DEATakeBack.com

Lieutenant Andy Knotz (763) 324-5004